



LGHS

Senior Issue

CLASS OF 2021



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LGHS UNICEF uses donuts to raise money for vaccines

by **Cara Davidson**

Public Relations Manager

Due to a constant need for COVID-19 vaccination funding, students in the LGHS United Nation International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) club began a fundraiser to raise money to help increase vaccine accessibility worldwide. Club members partnered with Krispy Kreme donuts to raise funds for UNICEF's COVAX campaign with a goal of ensuring that 190 countries have access to two billion vaccines by the end of 2021. LGHS UNICEF Club President junior **Arshia Mathur**, Vice President junior **Andrea Babalis**, and the rest of the club organized the fundraiser.



courtesy wikimedia commons

HELPING HAND: UNICEF sends hygiene kits to support underprivileged children.

From Apr. 19 to Apr. 23, students worked to sell boxes of donuts by the dozen, and offered a delivery service to customers who wanted a more timely delivery. Mathur described her club's mission to "help children globally, providing them with the resources we are already blessed to have." The club raised money to help fund the vaccination process and transportation to 190 countries. Mathur explained how it could take months to provide some countries with vaccinations, so their funds went mostly towards "transportation of vaccines into places that don't have the opportunity and access of going to the hospital to get one."

The LGHS UNICEF club began brainstorming for this project in February and they announced the project publicly through social media and connections in April. Club members publicized the fundraiser on their Instagram (@unicef.lgbs), reached out to teachers who shared the link with their classes, and even contacted the LGHS principal to get the word out. Babalis explained, "It was a really special and proud moment when we saw our principal sending a link that said 'UNICEF LGHS' to the whole school." With this publicity, the club was able to sell over 70 boxes of a dozen donuts and raised over one thousand dollars for the COVAX plan.

LGHS's UNICEF club wanted to get the word out to the public, encouraging them to get vaccinated, and they wanted to ensure an easier process for countries that have fewer resources than America does. Mathur explained that their club "wanted to host vaccines because it'd be a year since quarantine began..., and with the emergence of the vaccine [they] thought it would be a good idea to emphasize its importance." Also, she says, "Not only did they get a

really delicious treat, but they were able to save lives." The LGHS UNICEF club continuously preached "Nobody is safe until everybody is safe."

LGHS's ambitious fundraiser spread to many other schools, even inspiring another high school UNICEF club to do their own donut-vaccine fundraiser. The two girls recognize America's privilege, stating "we're really lucky to have such immediate access to the vaccine...in a lot of other countries they don't have that immediate access and even if they have access, it's a very slow and tedious process. We wanted to say we are all still a community as COVID has shown us this past year. It's not just us and this town, but globally we are all together."



courtesy flickr

SAVING LIVES: UNICEF representatives provide vaccines for developing countries.

Students reflect on return

by **Georgia Kaufman**

Humor Editor

On May 3, all Los Gatos High School students who chose to return to campus were brought back for in-person learning for the first time since Mar. 13, 2020. Students and staff at LGHS were filled with mixed emotions after finally being able to come back to school.

Sophomore **Jonah Grancell** expressed his excitement for the return to school, saying, "I think it's a really great opportunity to see people in person again. I also think it's a really good opportunity for the people who were struggling online to start doing well again." Reflecting upon himself, he noticed he has a harder time with in-person learning. He attributes this issue to the switch, noting that, "I just have to actually pay attention in all of my classes."

Sophomore **Kirin Desai** experienced similar emotions to Grancell: "I feel good about going back in person. I like it a lot because I can actually see people and interact with them rather than just being on Zoom." He then went on, excited that "the only issue [he's] faced is the senior lot traffic." Desai added that he thinks "there should be another exit out of the lot."

Freshman **Amanda Kupor** had mixed feelings about coming back to school. She "felt nervous about coming back to school, but after a few days [she believed] it got a lot easier." She examined the differences between online and in-person classes, explaining "it's very different from distance learning because both the teachers and students are much more engaged with each other so it's easier to learn." She expressed that her only issue with the switch was "getting lost during the first few days."

Sophomore **Francesca Evans** reflected: "I have definitely begun to feel claustrophobic at school. It feels as though everything is very rushed and I

have felt either very tired, stressed, or both." She reflected on her previous statement, saying, "It might just be because it's the end of the year and there is so much happening on top of coming back to school, but it feels like there is less time with so much more work." She added: "I am definitely way more stressed than I was online, and it's been really hard to get back into the swing of things, especially with school on Wednesdays."



A. Evans

SPOT YOURSELF?: Students flood campus as they return.

The students and staff of LGHS are attempting to find a new middle ground and a healthy median for the switch to in-person learning. The last weeks of the 2020-2021 school year are quickly approaching, so everyone is trying their hardest to get all of their work done to the best of their abilities, while also juggling this enormous switch in lifestyle.

COVID grad plans amaze

by **Jordan Chan and Alexandra Evans**

Local News Editors

Los Gatos High School's Senior Graduation ceremony will take place on Helm Field on Jun. 4. Administrators moved the event from its usual location on the front lawn of the high school to protect graduates and attendees from the spread of COVID-19. The school will take other precautions including staggered arrival times for guests, masking, and socially distanced guest tables. LGHS staff will enforce masking at all times for guests, graduates, staff, and speakers, although some exceptions may apply to students taking pictures on campus before or after the ceremony.

Graduates can invite up to four guests each, and these guests will sit together at a table spaced a few feet apart from others. Guests will be on both bleachers and on the half of the field closest to the high school. The far end of the field is where the graduates will be sitting. Although they will not make physical contact with anyone during the ceremony, they will walk across a stage like they have in past years and receive important items like diplomas after the conclusion of the event.

Despite these changes, Assistant Principal **Adam Minyard** stated that, "[LGHS] is trying to replicate it the same way it's always been." In many ways, this graduation ceremony looks like the same model of years past. Graduates still will walk and wear standard caps and gowns.

Similar to previous years, students will give celebratory speeches commemorating and looking back on their time at LGHS. The senior English teachers are conducting tryouts for student speakers whom they will name in the coming weeks. The school is also in search of one student to sing the National Anthem and another to sing the Alma Mater. As organizers work out these details, they will decide whether or not to pre-record the acoustic aspects

of the event, such as musical performances. As with other aspects of the event, all presenters must keep their masks on for the duration of their performances.



A. Evans

STAYING SAFE: Helm Field will be the venue for senior

To ensure COVID-19 safety, graduates will be marching in pairs of two rather than the usual lines of four. As a new precaution, graduates will be required to march out of the venue before meeting up with spectators of the event to reduce congregating on Helm Field. All involved at the event will remain physically distanced and wear masks for the duration of the night.

For those who cannot attend the event due to capacity limitations or choose to graduate virtually, the event will be live streamed on YouTube via KCAT. The footage captured will later be made into a purchasable video. Although some will attend remotely, their names will be called at the live graduation nonetheless.

Following the ceremony will be Grad Night, a celebration at LGHS from 10:30 PM to 6:30 AM limited to Class of 2021 attendance. Tickets are for sale on the LGHS website for 150 dollars before May 30 and 200 dollars after. This year, mask wearing and Screener-19 clearance are required.

Man attacks two elderly Asian American women in SF

by **Brynn Gibson and Michaela Thimot**

Graphics Designer and National/World Editor

Standing at a bus stop on Sun., May 5, two elderly Asian women found their lives disrupted by an attacker armed with a knife. In the center of a busy San Francisco street in broad daylight, a man with a large blade stabbed both women multiple times.



courtesy flickr

ONGOING MOVEMENT: Protesters unite against the rise in anti-Asian violence.

Both victims survived the attack; the first woman, age 63, was treated at a nearby hospital with non-life threatening injuries. Although the second, 84-year-old woman's injuries were life-threat-

ening, she recovered after medical treatment. Their alleged attacker, 54-year-old Patrick Thompson, was arrested for attempted murder and two counts of elder abuse later that same day.

Patricia Lee witnessed the attack from her nearby flower stand. "He walked right next to me — I could have been the one who got stabbed," she stated. She explained that after the attack, the man just walked away as if nothing had happened at all.

Earlier that same week, Bruce, a 36-year-old man who decided to keep his last name anonymous, reported a similar incidence of unprompted violence towards Asian-Americans in San Francisco. Bruce was out walking with his one-year-old son when a stranger approached him, knocked him down, and began to punch him several times while his son sat in a stroller next to him. "I was on the floor and he was in a stroller that was rolling away, so it's definitely scary as a parent," he stated. Police quickly took action and arrested the man who attacked Bruce.

These are just a few of the many recent attacks on Asians and Asian-Americans in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. There has been an increase in Asian hate in San Francisco, as well as in the rest of the country. According to Stop AAPI Hate, an organization designed to collect data on anti-Asian hate, in only a year — from March 2020 to 2021 — there were 6,603 reported anti-Asian hate incidents. More than a third of these incidents occurred in 2021 and many incidents go unreported.

The majority of the recent attacks have occurred near the Tenderloin, a neighborhood in San Francisco known for its high rates of homelessness. Asian-American grandparents who are finally able to leave their homes due to the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions in the

Bay Area are once again fearful because of all the recent attacks. Surrounded by fellow pedestrians in broad daylight, Asian-Americans are being targeted with racial slurs, pushed down, beaten, stabbed, and sometimes killed.

Victoria Eng, the granddaughter of the elder of the two stabbing victims, organized a GoFundMe to support her grandmother during her recovery. "These Asian hate crimes need to stop," she shared. "San Francisco is my home and my Grandma's home. We need to feel safe where we live and not in constant fear."

(Sources: NY Times, Guardian, NPR)



courtesy wikimedia commons

CALL TO ACTION: In wake of attacks, protesters advocate for justice and peace.

Former student-athlete sues LGHS and Archbishop Mitty

by Esther Sun, Alaina Fox, and Sofia Rossi
Editors-in-Chief and News Editor

Content Warning: This article contains descriptions of sexual abuse

As LGHS students shuffled to their fifth period classes at 11:30 AM on Thurs., May 6, a small gathering formed on the school's front lawn. Alongside community members and a few current students, the press set up cameras and microphones. At the event, LGHS alumna **Heather Hennessey** spoke publicly for the first time about her alleged sexual abuse by former track coach **Chioke Robinson** while she was a student at LGHS.

"I want to make sure that the message gets across that these schools and coaches need to take protection of children and kids — athletes, students — seriously," said Hennessey in her speech, "because I went through this [abuse] my entire high school experience and I want it to stop now."

As of May 2021, five women have officially accused Robinson of sexually abusing them by reporting the abuse to law enforcement or filing a lawsuit. However, lawyers suspect that there are more victims who have yet to come forward.

Hennessey started her freshman year at Archbishop Mitty High School in 1997, where Robinson served as her track coach. According to the lawsuit, it was during this time that Robinson began groom-

ing her and repeatedly sexually molesting her on school grounds. After Hennessey transferred to LGHS in her sophomore year to escape Robinson, he began arriving at the track to watch her while she was at practice and eventually obtained a staff position as the LGHS girls track coach in 1998.

Hennessey's lawsuit further describes how when she informed **Willie Harmatz**, the LGHS head track coach at the time, of her abuse by Robinson, Harmatz simply "instructed her to stay away from Robinson and to run on the opposite side of the track with Harmatz as her coach." Robinson continued molesting and otherwise sexually abusing Hennessey on the LGHS campus.



NATIONAL CHAMP: Hennessey accepts Athlete of the Year Award.

Over the next two years, various other LGHS students attempted to notify the Los Gatos Police Department (LGPLD) about witnessing or receiving sexual abuse from Robinson. According to the lawsuit, Harmatz privately threatened to jeopardize their athletic careers or scholarship opportunities if they spoke to police. He also convinced then-Principal **Trudy McCulloch** not to fire Robinson. Robinson remained a coach at LGHS until 2001, when the school fired him for "poor judgement," while denying rumors about Robinson's sexual relationship with female student minors.

One of the former students who says they were threatened by Harmatz filed a lawsuit against LGSUHS, Harmatz, and Robinson this past January. Robinson currently faces 15 charges involving sexual abuse of minors in Santa Clara County.

In an interview with El Gato, Hennessey requested long-term, forward-thinking actions to transform the school culture: "I want to say to [the LGHS administration] that to do right by my case would be to show that justice is served and that they actually care for what I endured, but it also means to do right by all students here. And that's going to be not just one statement; that's not going to be just one policy. This is going to be something that has to be an ongoing change."

(Sources: Estey and Bomberger LLP, Mercury News, Business Wire, NBC Bay Area)



photos courtesy H. Hennessey

OVER THE SHOULDER: Hennessey poses for a professional photo.

EOC organizes fundraiser

by Caroline Wagner

Graphics Designer

This month, the LGHS Environmental Outreach Club (EOC) collaborated with Gravity Water, a non-profit organization, to fundraise over 2,000 dollars to provide safe drinking water for Madan Bhandari Memorial School (BMS) in Kathmandu, Nepal. BMS is located in Kathmandu Valley, nicknamed "Thirsty Valley" due to their severe water shortages. Currently, students at BMS rely on bottled water and underground bore water, which contains runoff contamination in the wet season and insufficient water in the dry season. However, the EOC has raised enough money to provide a rainwater catchment and filtration system. With this new technology, BMS will soon have a permanent on-site source of clean drinking water.



courtesy B. Mihalache

DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH: Mihalache makes art out of trash.

The EOC was first introduced to the Gravity Water organization at a town council board meeting while club president senior **Lany Tran** presented ways to reduce the town's carbon footprint. In addition to implementing a composting system at the school, Environmental Outreach wanted to find more ways to help communities to live sustainably. They met with a representative from Gravity Water and decided to collaborate by hosting a "Water Week" at the beginning of May.

Throughout the week, the club held various collaborations to raise awareness about the global water crisis. "This event touches on a different environmental issue that people don't typically associate with environmentalism," said Tran, "but it's important to raise awareness because the global water crisis has everything to do with the environment. Because of global warming's impact on the water supply, many communities are struggling to find access to clean water."

In collaboration with the LGHS Environmental Outreach club, the LGHS Art Club created projects inspired by environmental issues, such as a jellyfish sculpture made from trash by senior **Beatrice Mihalache** and an ocean made of denim textiles by senior **Camilla Williamson**. The piece is a statement about the large amount of water that it takes to create textiles. Other promotions included Instagram story bingo boards and wearing blue in support of the cause.

Around 40 club members and supporters met at Vasona Park on May 8 to support the cause by participating in a 5k. In Nepal, five kilometers is the average distance that women and children walk to collect clean drinking water.

"I was really excited for this event because it's different from the other projects we've done in the past," explained Tran. "We focused on making a direct impact on a community and it was really cool to see how we can support a system that's so far away. The main takeaway was that we can all make a difference no matter the distance."

PAEMST honors Messenger

by Sophie Sullivan

Opinion Editor

State Superintendent Tony Thurmond announced LGHS Advanced Science Research (ASR) Advisor and biology teacher **Cathy Messenger** as one of six state finalists for this year's Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST). PAEMST recipients receive a prize of 10,000 dollars from the National Science Foundation (NSF) as well as a "citation signed by the President of the United States" presented at an honors ceremony at the White House.

As the highest recognition possible for elementary and secondary STEM teachers, California submits three mathematics and three science educators as nominees for the PAEMST each year; the NSF ultimately selects one math and one science teacher from each state.

In January, assistant principal **Kristina Grasty** nominated Messenger for the award; in order to complete her nomination, Messenger then submitted a "videotaped lesson, a 15-page narrative about said lesson, a resume, and three letters of reference," she said in an interview. Upon learning about her status as a finalist, she said she was "pretty darn excited because it was so much work. It's really nice to feel validated because I put so much work into the ASR program and teaching, having left medical diagnostics to help students learn to be good critical thinkers."

As one of six California finalists, Messenger further submitted a three-page addendum in which she had a greater capacity to speak at length about ASR and her research opportunities outside of the biology classroom. Grasty also submitted a letter describing Messenger's accomplishments, for which she additionally selected comments from ASR alumni speaking on the program's long-term impacts on science research and development.

Reflecting on her career as an educator and scientist, Messenger referred back to one of her favorite quotes from biochemist Jennifer Doudna's book, in which Doudna's mentor proposes that having one of the people you mentor become a Nobel Laureate is better than being a Nobel Laureate yourself. "I left my field. I didn't get my PhD. I didn't go do research, but I'm so proud of all the students' lives I've touched," she related.

Being a finalist for such an award in a year as turbulent as this provides a moment of reflection for Messenger; she noted that the nomination reminded her of "why I became a teacher, why I put so much time into ASR... because this is the time of year it comes back to me."

Messenger continued speaking about her ASR students finalizing projects at the end of the school year, saying, "It's these amazing kids who've worked their butts off for weeks and weeks to meet those deadlines, and they've all learned to be resourceful and solve problems. As I've said before, it's all on you to be the critical thinkers that can sort through the mess that's out there right now... That's what science is."

(Sources: CDE, PAEMST)



CERTIFIED GENIUS: Books surround Messenger during class.

LGHS holds COVID-safe junior prom on Helm Field

by Sonali Muthukrishnan

National/World Editor

LGHS's junior prom took place on Sat., May 1, on Helm Field. The ASB leadership team surprised the class of 2022 with a junior prom announcement a couple of weeks before the planned event. ASB successfully pulled off junior prom, despite the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Junior Class President **Katherine Brezoczky** explained, "The planning was more difficult because of COVID-19, but it was worth it."

Before the event, students took plenty of photos with their friends. The junior class could not bring dates from other schools or grade levels at LGHS, as the dance had a limited capacity to make sure that the event stayed within Santa Clara County's guidelines. Upon students' arrival, the administration asked all of the attendees to fill out a Screener19 form and scan a QR code located at the entrance to the field. Once admitted to the event, administration seated students in different sections according to when they arrived.

The event's decorations had a gold and black theme. Each student had their own place setting at their respective table. Each table also had a beautiful centerpiece accompanied by a large hand sanitizer bottle. The leadership team set up a stunning photo background for students to take photos with on the field. While there was no dance floor in sight, juniors could play corn hole and spike ball throughout the night.



FINE DINING: Junior prom attendees feast on sandwiches.

Junior class Vice-President **Tatum Thomas** shared that ASB was "super happy with the outcome [of the event]. After a year of no in-person events, it was incredibly awesome to see so many students back on campus, coming together for a milestone like junior prom."

Prior to prom, the administration and leadership class emphasized the importance of face masks at the event. They expected the class of 2022 to wear masks whenever they were not sitting at their table and actively eating or drinking. However, not all students followed this protocol. A small group of students removed their masks at some point during the night, while others wore gators, which LGHS has previously stated are ineffective and not an acceptable alternative to masks when on campus.

Overall, the junior class enjoyed the event. Junior **Marissa Hein** shared, "It was really fun to see everyone. Having it outside gave it a great vibe and it was a great way to maintain social distancing, especially since the weather was so nice."

Junior **Zhurri Cleary** also reflected on the event, stating, "I had a great time with my friends and feel really lucky that we were able to have a prom at all. It was nice to see everyone again and it made everything seem a little more normal again."



photos S. Muthukrishnan

STRIKE A POSE: Students take a photo clad in their prom dresses.

- New COVID-19 variation "Eek"
- Cicadas flood Eastern states

Texas and Florida pass new state voting legislation

by Sidney Bricker
Media Production Editor

Texas and Florida both moved in favor of restrictive legislation on voting. Texas's House of Representatives passed the legislation on Friday, the 7, after long battles with Democrats aiming to stop the Republican-dominated House from approving the bill. In Florida, Governor Ron DeSantis signed a new voting bill into law on May 6.

DeSantis, like many other Republican politicians, has always supported changing state-level voting laws. He claims that making changes to these laws in anticipation of problems threatening to arise in elections can help the public trust the election process and results. According to the Washington Post, Florida's bill requires election officials to share more information regarding voting statistics, voters to renew their applications for mail-in ballots once every two years, and those who distribute mail-in ballots to request additional identification from those who request ballots. It also bars private donations from assisting election administration and any behavior with the intent of influencing a voter. Furthermore, it limits how many ballots an individual may drop off on behalf of other voters and curtails the use of ballot drop boxes.

If passed, Texas' bill would allow more rights and powers to partisan poll watchers and increase the difficulty of removing said poll watchers for election officials if their behavior becomes unruly or even illegal. The legislature would also prohibit election officials proactively from mailing out applications for absentee ballots or the ballots themselves, as well as increasing the penalties an election worker would face for helping voters in any way that violates election rules. Original versions of the bill also included bans on drive-through voting, voting machine-related laws which would have forced a reduction in polling locations in some areas, and provisions allowing for partisan poll-watchers to photograph or videotape voters. However, lawmakers have since removed these more extreme measures.

In the years leading up to the pandemic, it was Republicans who were more likely to vote via mail-in ballots. However, during the 2020 election, that statistic flipped, and Democrats made up the majority of mail-in ballots while most Republicans voted in person. Especially in Texas and Florida, one key demographic of those who cast their ballots from home via the postal service in 2020 were Black and brown voters, a large percentage of whom voted for the Democratic party.

Both Texas and Florida's bills will disproportionately affect people of color. A clause in Florida's bill outlaws non-government sanctioned volunteers passing out food or water to voters in line. Floridians of color generally have to endure longer lines than white floridians. In warmer months, waiting in these lines promises to be especially draining without the benefit of volunteer-provided water bottles. The new laws will likely make lines even longer because they remove many other options, leaving large numbers of voters with only the choice to either vote in-person on election day, or not vote at all. Some critics see crackdowns on mail-in voting, as well as the banning of citizens handing out food and water in voting lines, as deliberate attempts to limit the power of Black and brown voters.

(Sources: NY Times, CNN, Washington Post)



ELECTION ELATION: A sign directs citizens toward voting booths in Taft, Texas.



VITAL VOTES: A woman privately submits her votes for local representation.

Masses of cicadas emerge during record breeding year

by Jackie King
Humor Editor

The Eastern United States is welcoming a once-every-17-years event: the arrival of the cicadas Brood X.

These finger sized winged insects — classified as either Brood X or Brood Ten cicadas — will be hard to miss this year as they take over trees, cars, sidewalks, and more. But if you do happen not to see them, you will definitely hear their call that can reach nearly 100 decibels, the same level as a lawn mower.

The millions of cicadas that are expected to rise from the ground this year have been waiting to emerge since their last invasion 17 years ago. This 2021 generation is expected to come out in mid-to-late May and live four to six weeks. In this time period they will breed repeatedly and leave the next generation of cicada larvae sheltered in the ground. These new larvae will wait another 17 years for their time to hatch, which is expected in 2038.

Although Maryland will be the center of this birth, the cicadas do not stop at the state border. The nearby East Coast and Appalachian states of Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia are also expected to host millions of cicadas in the next month.

After the nymphs begin digging their way to the surface this month, the insects will make their way to higher ground in any way possible. Telephone poles, tree tops, and traffic signs will quickly become pedestals for the cicadas' cacophony, and residents will soon be unable to avoid the deafening sound of the male mating call from above.

After the males find a successful mate, the females will lay their eggs throughout the East Coast on tree branches and bushes as their last act before they die off.

Mike Raupp, an entomology professor at the University of Maryland, stated, "These things have been living a dismal life, if you can imagine sucking on the roots of plants for 17 years, and then you get up and out. You're 17 years old, it's your day in the sunshine ... You're gonna sing your hearts out, court, mate, they're gonna lay eggs and then everybody's gonna die and that's the end" — a finale he compared to Romeo and Juliet.

The Brood X made its last appearance back in 2004 around May 11; this will be an extremely important moment for scientists to test their new strategy of measuring and collecting data. Raupp said that "rather than have a handful of people like myself running around and trying to collect data from Georgia to New York, now we can enlist thousands of citizen scientists to generate the large data set."

This generation scared scientists back in 2017 when some early-rising cicadas around Baltimore, MD, were discovered. Researchers wondered if the rising global temperatures might be confusing the insects' biological clocks, disturbing their cycle and possibly affecting the survival of the species, a theory that will be tested this year.

Although the cicada's emergence is usually dreaded by most people, many Americans are currently preoccupied with the return of pre-pandemic activities, leaving little room to care about these noisy insects.

(Sources: Baltimore Sun, NY Times)



INSECT INFESTATION: A hatched cicada sits atop a post during breeding season.

Biden increases refugee cap

by Revanth Rao
Sports Editor

On May 3, President Joe Biden increased the refugee cap to 62,500 refugees from the previous limit of 15,000 refugees set by President Donald Trump. The refugee cap is the limit on the number of refugees the US admits during a fiscal year, which runs from Oct. 1 of one year to Sept. 30 of the next year. In a statement released by the White House,



SERIOUS SPEECH: Biden presents at a campaign event.

While Biden more than quadrupled the cap, he stated that it was likely unrealistic to expect the US to actually admit the full number of refugees before the fiscal year ends on Sept. 30. He noted that this was due in part to difficulties related to the pandemic and also due to Trump administration regulations and policies that made admitting refugees more difficult. Biden made clear in his statement that he is attempting to "undo the damage of the last four years" and that "work is already under way" to change the policies. He also said that the US will attempt to double the cap for the next fiscal year, creating a cap of 125,000 refugees. If implemented, the cap of 125,000 would be the highest figure since the early 1990s.

Biden's new plan was popular among refugee organization leaders. David Miliband, president of the International Rescue Committee, a global aid organization, applauded Biden's "support of refugees." On the other hand, the policy was not as popular with Republican lawmakers. Arkansas Senator Tom Cotton tweeted his reaction to the news, saying that the increased cap "will put American jobs and safety at risk" and said that Biden should instead be "focused on getting Americans back to work."

(Sources: NY Times, Reuters, Washington Post)



WALLED IN: The wall at the US/Mexico border stands tall.

COVID-19 cases decline

by Quincy Marks
Public Relations Manager

As the United States continues to administer vaccines, the rate of cases is declining. While state by state data still varies, the U.S. is now averaging 38,000 cases per day, the lowest rate since Sept. 15. As of May 11, 115.5 million people are fully vaccinated, according to CDC data.



CHECKING IN: A doctor monitors a patient with COVID.

and Lyft will provide free rides to and from vaccination sites, as President Joe Biden wants to have at least 70 percent of the population with one or more shots by July 4. However, the rate of vaccination has declined in recent weeks, slowing down to two million vaccinations per day. Health experts note that this slow down was expected, and getting to Biden's goal of 70 percent of the population vaccinated will be challenging. With increasing access to the vaccine and more reassurance from community doctors, health officials feel as though they can get those who are skeptical vaccinated.

U.S. health regulators also announced earlier this week that the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine can be administered to 12 to 15 year olds. The announcement comes after the U.S. saw an increase in COVID-19 cases among children. In early May, children accounted for 24 percent of new weekly cases, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.

While the future is unpredictable, many signs point towards a summer with fewer cases and fewer restrictions. For now, the U.S. will focus on distributing the vaccine to as many Americans as possible in order to meet Biden's goal to celebrate the Fourth of July like normal.

(Sources: Reuters, CNN, NY Times)

With the overall decline of cases, there are major signs that this upcoming summer will have fewer restrictions. Many states have announced that they will be lifting their mandates around mask wearing and capacity limitations. States like Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, and Mississippi no longer require mask wearing. Other states like California, Nevada, and Massachusetts plan to fully reopen businesses by the summer. However, the ease of restrictions do not always correlate with a decline in cases; according to Reuters, Wyoming, New Mexico, and Arkansas have had an increase in cases for over two weeks. Illinois, Michigan, Wyoming, South Dakota, Missouri, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida have also seen an increase in COVID-19 deaths over the last two weeks.

In order to make vaccinations more accessible, the White House announced on May 11 that Uber



CAREFUL NOW: A technician performs an antibody test.

- Israel kills hundreds in Palestine
- COVID-19 variants spread globally

Israeli airstrikes kill hundreds of Palestinians in Gaza

by Alia Arafah
Editorial Editor

Since Israel's inception in 1948, violence against Palestinians and clashes between Palestinians and the Israel Defense Force (IDF) have fluctuated, often taking the form of land seizures and expansion on behalf of Israel. Every few years, a new conflict causes unrest, violence, and casualties. Recently, the forced removal of six Palestinian families from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah brought about attacks and violent clashes between Israelis and Palestinians.

The takeover of Palestine was the start of unrest in the area. It began after World War II, which exiled many Jewish people from their homelands and popularized the idea of Zionism. Britain appointed Palestine to be a new territory for displaced Jewish people. Throughout the decades of Israeli occupation, the Israeli government continued to push Palestinians into a smaller territory, dwindling the area they have left. Palestinians are not allowed to leave the country, are not granted full citizenship, and face frequent violence from the IDF.

Sheikh Jarrah is a neighborhood in East Jerusalem where about 30 Palestinian families live. The country of Jordan appointed this neighborhood for Palestinian refugees to live in following the 1948 inception. However, Israel allows Jewish landlords to have legal jurisdiction over the properties in the neighborhood. These landlords hope to evict the Palestinian families and instead sell the houses to Israelis.

The Israeli Supreme Court recently gathered on May 10 to vote on whether or not the Palestinian families would be forcefully removed from their homes, but the legislature postponed the

vote for a month due to the civil unrest. Israeli officials continue to characterize these removals as "evictions;" however, many Palestinians are calling it "forced ethnic displacement."

Hamas, an extremist organization, fired rockets following a conflict at Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest place in Islam and also a sacred place for Judaism and Christianity, dating back to 705 AD, which left around 200 people injured. The Israeli military fired 200 rockets along the Gaza Strip in response to Hamas. On May 10, an Israeli bomb hit an empty school and another killed 24 Palestinians, nine of whom were children.



UP IN FLAMES: Israeli airstrikes blow up targets, killing many in the Gaza Strip.

Two things ignited the conflict at the mosque: Jerusalem Day and the evictions at Sheikh Jarrah. Jerusalem Day is an Israeli national holiday celebrating the Israeli takeover of Jerusalem. It involves a flag parade that leads through the Muslim part of the city to get to the Western Wall. This holiday is known to upset Palestinians because it celebrates their takeover. The combination of events led to an escalation in violence, ultimately resulting in the firing of rockets by Hamas. On the morning of May 11, the Israeli military sent another series of rockets into the Gaza Strip, and that shelling continues. The death toll has reached at least 200 Palestinians, 59 of whom are children. Ten people were killed in Israel.

While there are rockets being fired on both sides, Israel's air defense system, called the Iron Dome, protects the city of Tel-Aviv. The Iron Dome uses a radar system to shoot down rockets fired from Gaza with about a 90 percent success rate. A clear power dynamic is at play and the United States contributes to this due to their funding of the Israeli military, specifically the US-funded Iron Dome. Many believe Israel is hitting Palestinians disproportionately, as Gaza has no defense system and little to no international aid compared to that of Israel. Currently, Palestinians are facing significantly greater devastation due to their lack of a defense system and lack of international aid.

It does not appear that the conflict will settle for a while, and many are worried that a war will break out. Fighting "could continue for some time," said Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister. (Sources: MSN, Newsweek, Middle East Eye, The Washington Post, ABC7)

Rocket crashes into ocean

by Quincy Marks
Public Relations Manager

On May 8, China's Long March 5B Rocket, coming in at 100 feet long and almost 40,000 pounds, plummeted into the Indian Ocean, near the Maldives. The rocket stirred up controversy as Chinese officials were unsure where and when it would land after they lost control of it. People online worried about the potential crash locations, and the U.S. government criticized the Chinese government for its lack of transparency. However, the Chinese government responded, claiming that western countries were fear mongering and trying to diminish its work.



IGNITION: Model rockets sit at a Chinese military museum.

According to the New York Times, rockets of this size usually descend back to Earth after they are discarded by a space station. This allows scientists to determine where the rocket will fall and assure that it lands safely. However, the rocket began an "uncontrolled reentry" after friction from the atmosphere caused the rocket to lose altitude. This isn't the first time China has let space equipment fall uncontrollably back to earth; various pieces of space equipment have rained down over rural China and the Ivory Coast over the last few years.

China is not the only country to have dealt with these uncontrolled entries; in fact, in March parts of a SpaceX rocket landed in Washington, making China skeptical of NASA's criticisms of their space program. In a statement, NASA administrator Sen. Bill Nelson noted that "spacefaring nations must minimize the risks to people and property on Earth of re-entries of space objects and maximize transparency regarding those operations." In response, the Global Times, a Chinese state-run newspaper, wrote that NASA is attempting to "use the noises they made to obstruct and interfere with China's future intensive launches for the construction of its space station." The Tiangong — China's Space Station — is currently being built as Chinese astronauts are not allowed on the International Space Station. A law passed in 2011 also placed restrictions on NASA's ability to interact with China. Chinese officials view these restrictions as an attempt to prohibit the advancement of China's space program.

Despite tensions, officials stated that they are glad that the rocket did not harm anyone in its descent back to earth. In the future, scientists hope that China follows the practices outlined by other countries in their space exploration. (Sources: CBS News, CNN, NY Times)



SPACE TALK: Nelson presents at Cape Canaveral, Florida.

COVID explodes in India

by Raphael Pelayo and Trent Bartlett
Media Production Editor and Sports Editor

Just weeks after India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave a speech to thousands of Indian citizens regarding the country's low COVID-19 rates, the infection rates rose to highs that no country has seen before. India is currently experiencing a devastating second wave that has daily infection rates as high as 400,000 cases, test positivity rates of around 20 percent, and a fluctuation of daily deaths spanning 3,000 to 4,000.

Many epidemiologists estimate that the actual number of new cases is drastically higher than the reported numbers, and neighboring countries such as Nepal report almost 50 percent of the people tested for the virus with positive results.

The rise is mainly affecting India's capital of New Delhi, which has the most daily cases of any region in the country. Along with many hospitals in the area not being able to take in new patients, crematories are working tirelessly to keep up with the high death rates. Many countries have sent money and supplies to help combat the rise in cases, including the United States, and Britain.

Due to the staggering number of cases, many Indians have to compete with each other for resources such as oxygen and hospital beds, especially for those in lower-income families or those who live in rural areas. Sonali Gulati, a professor of Photography and Film at Virginia Commonwealth University remarked, "There's clearly inequality. There are places where there are no hospitals for hundreds of kilometers. People don't [even have] hospitals or doctors or medical help." Alongside a national shortage of vaccine doses —



911: A healthcare worker carries a patient in New Delhi.

only approximately 11.5 percent of India's population is vaccinated — a majority of the doses India produces get exported.

The Prime Minister has yet to make any televised speech since Apr. 20, after making large speeches at several political rallies in which thousands of unmasked supporters attended. Despite hosting these large events, Modi has sent mixed messages regarding the pandemic, claiming that India had reached the "endgame" while downplayed the severity of the virus, but has since encouraged Indians to stay home if they can. Many Bharatiya Janata Party members have renounced their support for Modi, such as BJP member Arun Goyal stating, "This government has failed us. I just saw a patient die right in front of me. We're all on our own now." (Sources: World of Meters, BBC News, CNBC, NBC News, NY Times, NPR)

Nations race to vaccinate as variants of COVID spread

by Sidney Bricker
Media Production Editor

While vaccination efforts pick up speed across the country, one of America's most important concerns — that a mutation of the COVID-19 virus against which vaccines are ineffective will arise — remains a dangerous possibility.



JUST A PINCH: Vaccines have varying degrees of efficacy against new variants.

As of Apr. 20, a new variant of interest was the most common strain in India, where the current coronavirus crisis serves to speed up the mutation and spread of said mutations. B.1.617, known as the "India Variant," made its debut into the realm of feared mutations this month, and though scientists know little about its properties, it is spreading fast. It carries over 12 mutations, including mutation L452R, which it shares with the prevalent "California Variant," B.1.429. The India Variant also contains mutation E484Q, which, according to the New York Times, "lies at the same location as E484K, the 'Eek' mutation that might help the virus evade some types of antibodies." On Mar. 5, scientists also found E484K in a sample from a strain in Portland, OR.

Other important variants of concern and variants of interest include a variant from Brazil with numbers on the rise, P.1, which scientists believe to be more transmissible and has demonstrated slightly reduced efficacy in vaccines working against it, as well as a second Brazil variant, P.2, which scientists believe to be more transferable than currently dominant strains. Both Brazil variants may be able to reinfect those who have already recovered from COVID-19. New York variants of interest B.1.526 and B.1.525 are also spreading fast, and though scientists do not know enough about them to draw conclusions, both contain the "Eek" mutation which may allow them to evade antibodies.

While hundreds of variations of the COVID-19 virus exist, not all are more dangerous or faster spreading than the original: the vast majority aren't. The problem is, however, when a worse virus strain mutates, it can spread quickly and become the new most prevalent virus strain. Such was the case with the mutated strain B.1.1.7, commonly referred to as the "U.K. Variant." As of Apr. 17, this variant, which is about 50 to 70 percent more transmissible and could be up to 60 percent more deadly, was the most common source of new American COVID-19 infections. B.1.1.7 spread quickly since its emergence around September, and rose to fame among scientists and concerned citizens alike in December and January. By Feb. 7, the variant in the U.S. was doubling in numbers every ten days. Luckily, vaccines are still effective against this variant and it is unlikely to reinfect those who have already contracted and recovered from COVID-19.

Though some speculate that the "Eek" mutation may spell the beginning of a frightening new chapter in our country's pandemic, the good news is that the emergence of a variant that can completely evade antibodies instead of just partially seems incredibly unlikely. Chances are, current vaccines will not become obsolete despite the emergence of variants that can work around them, though there is a chance they could become less effective as these new mutations spread. (Sources: NY Times, CDC, Nextstrain, Axios)

- Lessen college pressure at LGHS
- Seniors share their final words of wisdom

EDITORIAL

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Students must reduce stigma surrounding college

by Alia Arafah, Angela Sheu, and Raphael Pelayo
Editorial Editor and Media Production Editors

Nearly all of Los Gatos High School's graduating seniors choose to attend college; 98 percent of the LGHS class of 2020 attended college after high school, in comparison to the national average of about 70 percent. Due to the area's affluence and most students' parents being college educated, many students simply accept going to college as the next step after high school.

Culturally, attending college is a sign of prestige and success. However, equating attending college with success puts pressure on students by perpetuating stigma around college and college admissions. It also alienates students who decide to pursue other paths after high school. It is important for the futures of LGHS students that we, as a community, can grow to be supportive and accepting of all students' chosen pathway.

While the college experience allows students to explore their interests, earn a degree, and eventually find their place in the workforce, college might not be the best option for some students. **Bella Parker**, an LGHS graduate of the class of 2017, currently in beauty school, stated she "absolutely did not want to go to college and [she does not] think it was the right option for [her]." **Anya Setziol**, a junior at LGHS, echoed this statement, as she has already "solidified the fact that [she] did not want to go to college," after having time during the pandemic to consider her options.

Even those who do attend two- or four-year colleges must undergo stressful application processes, which are

especially taxing for students who feel that acceptances into prestigious universities are crucial. Instead of prioritizing their overall happiness and mental health, students often focus heavily on their grades and extracurriculars in hopes that academic and extracurricular well-roundedness will assist them in getting into top colleges. Most people at LGHS can agree that there is immense pressure to conform to traditional ideas of success, whether that means earning a GPA greater than 4.0, attending an Ivy League college, or training to be a top athlete.

This pressure has many sources, which can vary depending on the individual expe-

riencing it. Junior **Tatum Thomas** feels that the pressure "really comes from other students. [T]he culture at Los Gatos...can be really toxic sometimes." She added that people will ask her about test scores and AP classes, and "if you don't say above a 1500 or above four AP classes, all of a sudden, you're less than." Senior **Zoë Arnold** agrees that "the only pressure [she's] encountered was from [her] peers on themselves." For seniors, the college application process itself is

a source of great stress, indirectly pressuring students to attend certain colleges or take certain pathways. It hinders applicants' abilities to focus on their own needs and desires, as they instead worry about what their peers may think of them. **Tamera Parks**, a LGHS counselor, agrees with Thomas in that "sometimes the pressure spreads among the students themselves."

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has also changed many seniors' post-high school plans. During the 2019-2020 school year, many universities sent their students home in order to slow the spread of coronavirus.

Still, colleges continued to charge the same tuition, leading many to wonder if these universities are worth the cost.

In addition, due to the stress caused by the events of the past year, many students are in need of some time off. LGHS college counselor Marie Rector notes that some students are considering taking a gap year due to this, as "next year might be a good year to get a job or stay with family. . . everybody has to do what works for them."

Besides taking a gap year, LGHS counselor **Kassandra Cochran** says, "although it's not a big percentage, [some students] decide to try different things." She adds that some "choose the military. Some will go to trade schools or art schools." Even

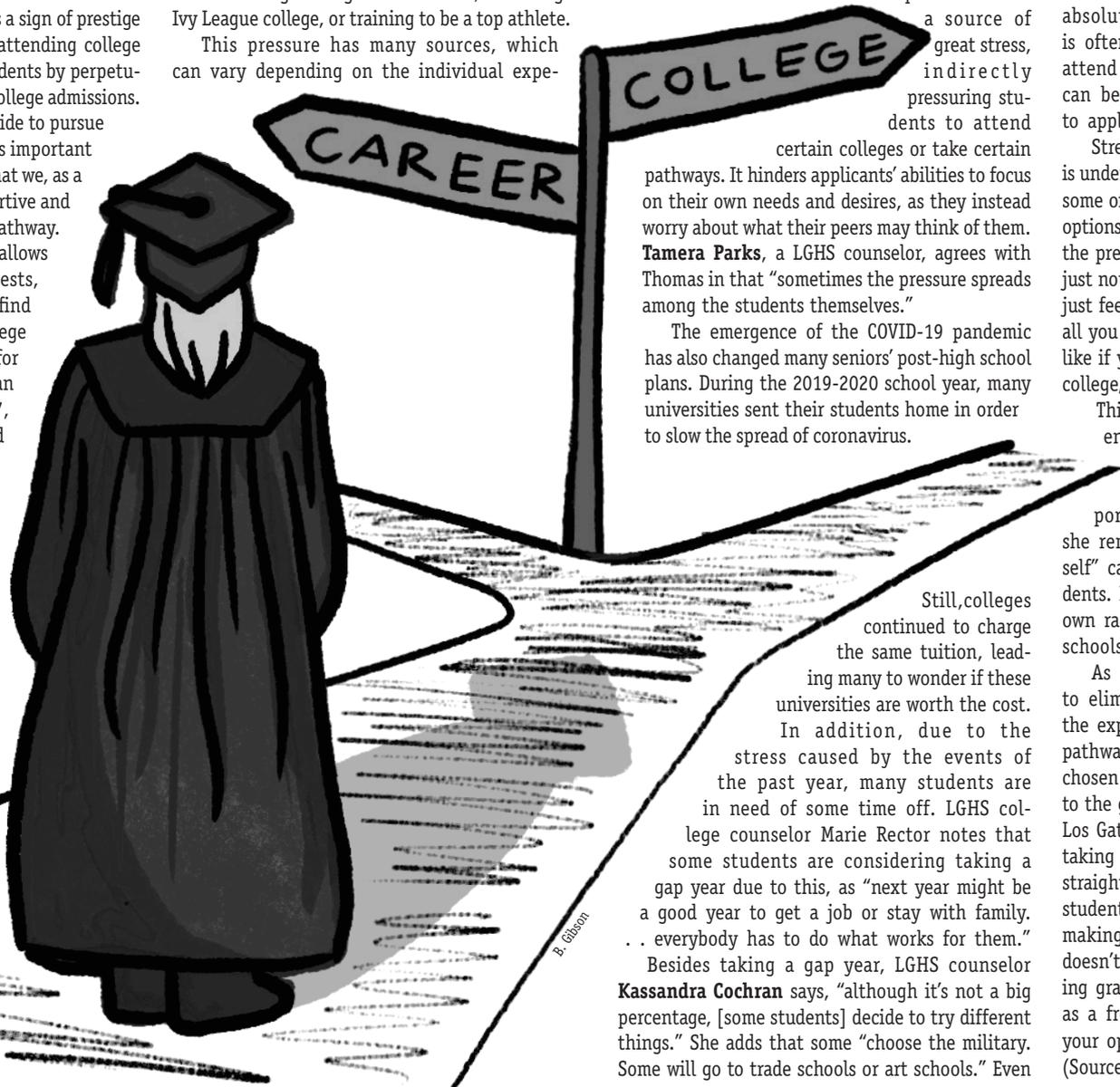
those enrolled in college do not always choose a traditional academic path, instead choosing career-oriented programs, like culinary, music, or art programs.

Additionally, students often have the viewpoint that prestige is more important than whether or not a college is the right fit for them. English teacher **Kurt Kroesche** explained that "To gain admission into an elite university is wonderful, but I don't think it's for everybody. . . Getting into an elite university or a name university is absolutely not a requirement for success." It is often times unrealistic for many students to attend a school simply for the name, and this can be taxing for those who feel the pressure to apply to and attend an expensive university.

Stress around getting into and going to college is understandable, but the community can alleviate some of it. First, students should consider all their options before making a decision. Parker agrees that the pressure to attend college "came from, partly, just not knowing [she] had other options. It really just feels like you have to go to college and that's all you can do. Especially in Los Gatos, people act like if you don't get a degree and you don't go to college, it's over for you."

This pressure also comes from students influencing each other's decisions. In particular, Cochran believes that social media is a large contributor. While she supports students celebrating their successes, she reminds that "keeping the process to oneself" can prevent putting pressure on other students. Parks also advises students to "run [their] own race, do [their] own research, and apply to schools that are really a good fit for [them]."

As a community, we need to work together to eliminate the college stigma and encourage the exploration of various breadths of fields and pathways. Equating the value of a person to their chosen pathway after high school is detrimental to the growth and development of the students at Los Gatos High School. Attending a trade school, taking a gap year, joining the military, or going straight into a career are great options for some students, and no one should feel ashamed over making a decision that is right for them. Life doesn't end after high school. Rather than viewing graduation as the end goal, begin viewing it as a fresh start. Encourage growth, consider all your options, and focus on your own well-being. (Source: National Center for Education Statistics)



May/June

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
23	24	25 Board Meeting	26 Local scholarship senior award night webinar	27	28	29
30 Senior class of 2021 Baccalaureate Ceremony (4:00PM)	31 Memorial Day (no school)	1 Final Exams Senior Breakfast Day and Bike Parade (10AM-12PM)	2 Final Exams End of third grading period/second semester Senior Celebration and BBQ (11AM-1PM)	3 Graduation mandatory rehearsal & Senior Awards (9:00AM)	4 Graduation (6:00PM) Grad Night (10:30PM-6:00AM)	5
6	7	8 Board Meeting	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19

HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

Please send ANY + ALL THOUGHTS and OPINIONS TO: lghselgatochiefs@gmail.com

B. Gibson

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El Gato seniors share their best advice for high school



REVANTH RAO

As someone who's not totally sure how they made it to 18 in one piece, I'm not sure I'm really equipped to give you the best advice. But you're probably not going to listen to anything I say, so who cares? I would tell you to follow your dreams or something cliché like that, but everyone knows that stuff is total garbage adults make up to make you feel like you haven't completely failed and lost any sense of purpose in your life. In all seriousness, I would just say that you shouldn't worry or care too much about anything, especially if it isn't important. Find what matters to you and care about that way too much because you never know. Even if you think you know, you probably don't.



ESTHER SUN

Find at least two things to do that you love with your whole heart. Read Mary Oliver. When you feel awful: shower, hydrate, eat, and sleep. Think critically. Keep in mind that you often end up sharing values and habits with the friends you surround yourself with. Be intentional.

Nothing is a waste of time. Every risk we take and struggle we bite down on is an important part of the people we will become. So don't worry about getting everything exactly right — life is forgiving and lovely, and "whoever you are, no matter how lonely, the world offers itself to your imagination, calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting — over and over announcing your place in the family of things."



ALAINA FOX

One of the skills I learned in high school is vocal contrarianism, so I'm going to go against the grain a little bit here. My best high school advice? Don't do it. Everything is optional. Run away to a little forest clearing in Ireland with your closest friends and form a commune. Who needs calculus when you're soaking in the lack of sun (Ireland is not sunny AT ALL), picking wild berries (they might be poisonous but that's a problem for future you), and best of all, enjoying the inherent homoeroticism of anarchistic ideals and rejection of capitalism (this is a well known feature). If, however, you feel like taking the masochistic route and staying in school like the sheep you are, remember to find time for yourself (AKA arson) once in a while.



LEXI KUPOR

My dad once told me that "life is one big joke," and he's right that your day will be a whole lot easier if you can laugh at yourself when you fall on the math/language building stairs during the tutorial rush. In all seriousness, you'll probably look back on these four years with embarrassment no matter what choices you make — I know I will — so, whatever they may be, make those choices wholeheartedly. Go get coffee with your favorite teacher. Work hard even when it's easier not to.

Read the assigned book. Look up from your phone. Wear Birkenstocks throughout the dead of winter. And for goodness' sake, stop acting like you're too cool to dress up for spirit week — I promise you're not.

Our school is far from perfect, but so are we. As the wise Kanye West once said, "bird can't fly in a cage." I'm off to fly. Peace out!



RAPHAEL PELAYO

The best advice that I could give is to try anything that could interest you. As a person who has tried (and failed) many different things throughout my high school career, I've run into classes and activities that I enjoy out of sheer luck. Finding what you want to do in your free time or in the future doesn't randomly pop up one day, but instead comes after trying and trying lots of new things until something finally sticks with you. Knowing what you want to do with your life might not come in high school, but eventually you may stumble upon a class or a hobby that genuinely interests you.



CAROLINE WAGNER

Here are the most important things I've learned in my high school career: 1) A Dio addiction will drain your accounts and cause you to declare bankruptcy. Skip the iced caramel oat milk chai latte for today. 2) Sophomore year will be the worst year of your life and there's nothing you can do about it. Accept your fate and roll with the punches. 3) If you walk in on someone in the bathroom or vice versa, avoid them for the rest of high school. 4) Don't overshare on your private story. Your one year ago today flashbacks will haunt you for the rest of your life. And finally, 5) Don't be ashamed to sprint to your car in the senior lot after school. Lower yourself to the level of those who ran to the snack cart in middle school.



SOFIA ROSSI

Phoebe Bridgers once said, "I'm not gonna go down with my hometown in a tornado," and I don't think I could write words more true or optimistic than those.

For the last four years, I felt like I would never make it out of this place — like the chaos and pain would last forever.

If I could say one thing to my past self it would be this: you are not what's happened to you or what you've been forced to endure at the hands, or through the complicity, of people who claim to care about you. Since I can't go back in time, I'm saying this to you. You can and will make it out of here, and there are so many beautiful things waiting for you.

High school is weird. One minute you are trying not to drown during the freshman P.E. swim unit, the next you are a senior doing the awkward, frantic fast-walk to your car. If I had one piece of advice to give my younger self, it would be not to sweat the small stuff. Stop stressing about stupid assignments or worrying about if people are going to make fun of your outfit. Focus on yourself, focus on making memories with your friends, focus on the present. At the end of all this, you aren't going to remember all the tests you failed (there will be too many to count), instead concentrate on pursuing your passions and making memories with your loved ones.

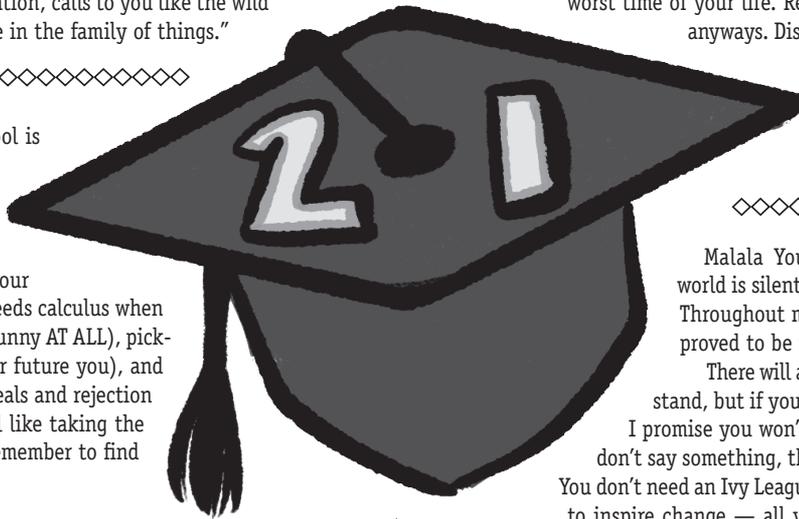


QUINCY MARKS

There are more than a few things I wish I could tell my freshman self (mainly to stop shaving my head and to not wait until turning 18 to get my driver's license). However, here's the most helpful advice I can pass down: don't live this stage of your life like it's a transition, nothing more than a stop sign on the road between childhood and adulthood. By all means, be excited to move on, to chase your dreams beyond this place. High school — here's a little known secret — is topped only by middle school as probably the worst time of your life. Realize this, then try to have a good time anyways. Discover what makes you happy, then chase it. Dive deeply and fully into life. Break the rules. Realize that no mistake you make will ever matter as much as you think it will. Above all else, don't just spend these four years just waiting for them to end.



COOPER BOWEN



Malala Yousafzai once said, "When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful." Throughout my time at this school, nothing has proved to be more true.

There will always be a personal cost to taking a stand, but if you truly believe in what you're doing, I promise you won't regret it. More importantly, if you don't say something, there's a chance no one else will either.

You don't need an Ivy League degree or a million Instagram followers to inspire change — all you need is the bravery to be the first person to break the silence. Anybody can do it. Even a 15-year-old girl.

These days, greatness is rarely forced onto us. Most of the time, it's our choice to start movements, to make waves. I think everyone has the potential to do something great while they're still young, so, more than anything, I encourage you all to choose to be the first voice — I encourage you all to break the silence.



SASHA RYU

The most important advice I would give my younger self is to talk to as many people as humanly possible. I spent so much time worrying about being too loud or loquacious, which ended up holding me back from making friends. This is one of the last times you will be thrown in with a bunch of random people whom you don't have much in common with, which is such a beautiful thing. I have learned so much from the diverse experiences of my peers and I crave to know more about each of their unique interests and personalities. So be talkative! Be annoying! Do whatever you can to make and hold on to your connections because by not doing so, you are denying yourself the best education you can receive: one from those around you.

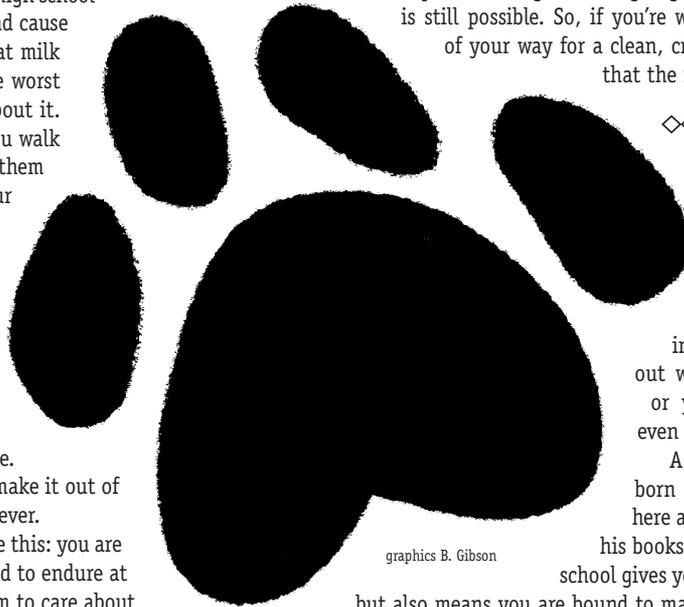


DELANEY BROWN

Perhaps the most valuable piece of advice I can pass down is that when you have to do your business at school, go to the music building bathrooms. Amid the dangers of flooded floors, mysterious stains, nicotine addicts, hate speech scrawled into the stall doors, broken toilet seats, blood, stalls that don't lock, and empty soap dispensers that plague all the other bathrooms at our school, the music building lavatories stand as a beacon of hope reminding us that going to the bathroom at school in peace is still possible. So, if you're willing to sacrifice a few extra steps out of your way for a clean, crisp, and comfortable bathroom experience, always remember that the music building has your back.



ETHAN SANDERS



graphics B. Gibson

As an 18-year-old who's barely able to decide what they want for dinner every night, I'm definitely the person you want to listen to for wisdom, so here it is. Clichés are always harder to put into practice than they are to say. Figure out what your values are (not your friends', or your parents', or anyone else's — yours) and stay true to them even when it's hard.

A person who is a whole lot smarter than me once said, "I was born not knowing and have had only a little time to change that here and there" (It was Richard Feynman; you should definitely read his books). Work hard and take advantage of all the opportunities high school gives you. You are constantly in a state of learning, which is amazing, but also means you are bound to make mistakes. Learn to forgive yourself and others. Know that things really do get better. Good luck and make yourself proud!

One final thing: Procrastination hurts you. Stop it (even though I probably won't).



MADDIE DEWHIRST



- French hijab ban is Islamophobic
- Increase diversity among film critics

Proposed French hijab ban spreads fear, Islamophobia

by Alia Arafah
Editorial Editor



There is no denying that France openly and harshly discriminates against Muslims; in fact, the country is notorious for its Islamophobia and anti-Islamic laws. While its treatment of Muslims in the past is far from acceptable, the French government crossed a line with its proposed hijab ban. Women must have bodily autonomy and the right to wear what they please, whether that be a headscarf or a mini skirt. In addition, the increased regulations on how Muslims can practice their religion in France deter younger generations from Islam and grow the divide between Muslims and their country. Though the lawmakers' attempts to regulate clothing are allegedly intended to curb terrorist attacks, they are doing the complete opposite.

In mid-March, French lawmakers proposed a bill that would prohibit women from wearing a headscarf while accompanying children on field trips and wearing a burkini at public pools. Women under the age of 18 would be banned from publicly wearing a headscarf at all. Rightfully, Muslim women were outraged over the proposed bill.

For Muslim women, the hijab is one of the most important parts of their faith. It allows them to represent their religion and a full devotion to God. Threatening to take that away from them is disgusting and discriminatory.

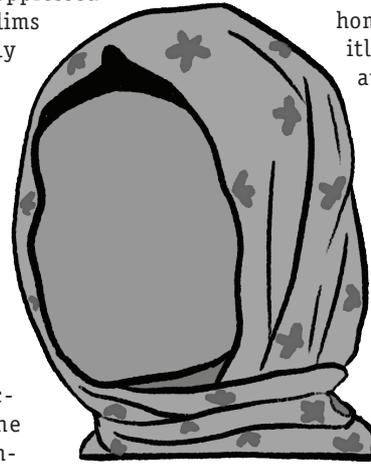
By proposing these bills, French legislatures ignorantly assume that Muslim women are oppressed and need liberation. This idea that Muslims need to be freed is insulting, especially because most women are proud of their modesty and of wearing a headscarf. French legislatures seem to have a white savior complex which makes them believe anyone who is not a white Christian is suffering in some way. In reality, we just want to be left alone to believe what we want and practice how we want.

The enactment of such laws, or even simply proposing them, deters younger generations from practicing Islam and wearing a hijab. The decision to put on the hijab is completely up to the women who wear it,

but influence from those in power will make young women feel obligated to take it off. Currently, French legislatures are producing a culture of fear and prejudice that is concerning for Islamic communities.

Before the proposed hijab ban, French President Emmanuel Macron proposed a law that would require parents to obtain permission from the government before homeschooling their children. While not explicitly stated, this law also targeted Muslims and attempted to curb, as Macron calls it, Islamic separatism. The law singles out Muslims and places unnecessary restrictions on them. This type of legislation further divides the country rather than bringing people together. Macron's approach completely misses the mark.

Real change will not come from division. It must come from changing the culture of the country and the way people treat each other. French Muslims experience racism and Islamophobia targeted towards them; the first step to making a change is preventing this.



B. Gibson

Old pals should reconnect

by Emily Duvall
Culture Editor



As we approach the light at the end of the COVID-19 tunnel and vaccine rollout is in full swing, "normal" life is slowly returning.

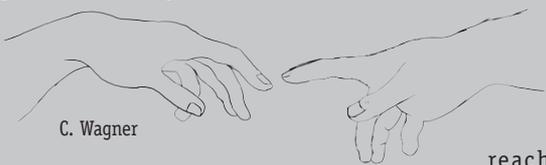
After almost a year and a half in quarantine, we have gotten quite accustomed to being at home and not interacting with people we normally would. As the world slowly opens back up, reconnect with people whom you may have been distant from during the pandemic.

For the majority of people, the pandemic led to losing touch with people whom we would normally interact with at work, school, or other places in everyday life. It is so easy nowadays to drift away from other people, as the last year made it super hard to stay close with others. I know that I have lost touch with people simply because of not being at school and not being able to do other normal activities. But recently, I started to reach out to some people whom I haven't spoken to in a while, and I can attest that it brings such a fulfilling feeling.

Getting a text or message from someone you have not heard from in a long time always sparks a smile, and after being cooped up for so long, it feels so good to check in and hear about how people are doing and how they have gone about the last year and a half.

Of course, we are not at the end of the pandemic, so I am definitely not suggesting to go out and break social distancing restrictions and pretend like the pandemic is over. Rather, I am saying that the end is in sight, and a simple text or call to someone you maybe haven't talked to in a second might make you feel happy. Meeting for a socially distanced coffee may just be the exact thing your mental health needs, or even the thing the person you are reaching out to needs.

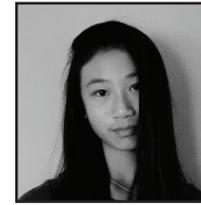
I have found that many people have done a lot of incredible or interesting things throughout quarantine, and that social media doesn't always show these aspects of people's lives. The best way to really check in with someone is to reach out directly. It makes you feel like there are good things coming in the future. I encourage you to send a text or make a call to someone you may have lost touch with throughout the pandemic, because I can assure you that it will make their day.



C. Wagner

Queer POC lack visibility

by Jordan Chan
Local News Editor

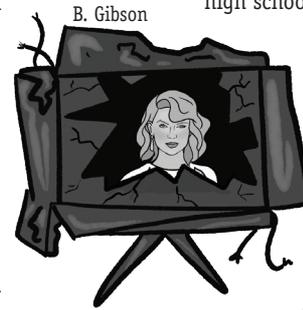


As a person born in 2005, I've grown up with a "Taylor Swift" version of the high school experience: kissing behind the bleachers, going to football games, and passing notes in class. There's a certain image that my generation has seen on screen and in the media of how we can avoid wasting the "most precious years of our lives." After I got to high school, I got to see my peers live out this ideal.

However, I — along with much of my generation — feel quite disconnected from it. This is because whiteness and heteronormativity are inextricably tied to these ideas. When you listen to love songs, watch popular teen movies, or read young adult literature, conflict centers around the straight, white couple. Both queer people and POC seem to have no place there.

The exclusion of communities of color and the LGBTQ+ community is unsurprising, especially when you consider the ways they're marginalized in all aspects of society. But too many fail to recognize how harmful this exclusion can be for young and impressionable teens struggling to fit in. Many disregard the "red tape" that surrounds queer and non-white kids trying to live out their high school years.

Everything is clearer when you consider high school dating. People who deviate from the norm have to ask themselves a plethora of questions before they can even consider pursuing a partner. Would that person even be interested in dating an Asian person? Would this person be willing to date an individual of the same sex? What about dating a nonbinary person? There's the constant question of, "would my person of interest even like a person like me?" looming over high schoolers who don't see themselves represented in the ideal high school experience.



B. Gibson

The issue serves as a reminder of the importance of representation. The content people consume is supposed to be a reflection of reality, but because industries that produce this media continue to marginalize communities of color and LGBTQ+ individuals, many young people do not feel seen. They feel as though their narratives are hidden from the public. They feel as though they don't have a place in society.

Fortunately, we're making progress. New voices have emerged in the media, and I think there are more inclusive versions of the high school ideal accessible to young people than there have ever been before. However, there is still a long way to go. Kids still look at their screens and wish they could see someone like themselves, and some content creators overcompensate for a lack of diversity with one-dimensional characters based on false or overexaggerated stereotypes about LGBTQ+ people and POC. So as much as I enjoy the "Taylor Swift" version of the high school experience, I look forward to seeing something new that represents more of us in the future.

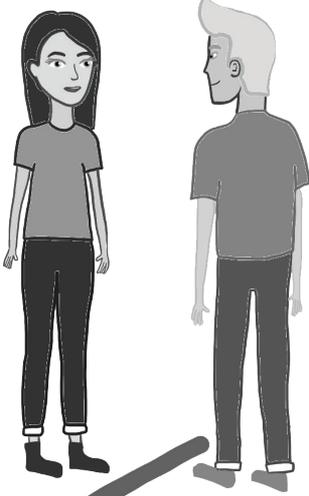
Draw a line between hypersexuality and sex openness

by Sophie Sullivan
Opinion Editor



Perhaps one of the most visible effects of a generally progressive society is the integration of sex positivity and sex openness into media, lifestyle, and culture. Acceptance of gender and sexual identities, promotion of sexual health and wellbeing, and renewed education on safety and consent — coupled with destigmatized, interpersonal conversations — is critical for intersectionality and tolerance. Yet, conversations about sex openness are too often riddled with hypersexuality and ignorance towards sexual assault survivors' boundaries and traumas; we must clearly define this binary, call out retraumatizing behaviors, and work towards a culture of consent and respect for all identities and experiences.

Hypersexuality is a broad term, but often presents itself in social situations as compulsive comments regarding sexual behaviors or desires. In conversation, hypersexuality additionally appears as an obsession with appearances or encouragement towards certain actions.



C. Wagner

Admittedly, it is a fine line to walk between hypersexuality and openness. Breaking the stigma around sex openness is a difficult feat in itself; in a 2020 report, the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) found that 35 U.S. states "require schools to stress abstinence when sex education or HIV/STI instruction is provided." SIECUS also concluded that only nine states required some form of consent education in curricula. Sex openness disproportionately skews towards men (see criticism towards female musicians' sexually explicit verses compared to their male counterparts) and marginalizes the LGBTQIA+ community (see the systemic suppression of HIV/AIDS support resources and heteronormativity in sex education).

And still — though moving forward with sex positivity is difficult enough as is — we must emphasize doing so correctly and within a culture of consent, respect,

and boundaries. In conversation with other survivors of sexual assault, it's evident that sex positivity and understanding consent and sexual health is integral to breaking the silence on rape culture and sexual violence. Healthy conversations destigmatizing abuse, establishing boundaries, and recognizing triggers create safety nets for survivors and persons with trauma. To accomplish this, however, we cannot move forward with blind hypersexuality, potentially retraumatizing survivors and creating unsafe environments for victims.

We cannot progress with sex positivity and openness until we first dismantle systems of discrimination and rape culture within society. We must give credence to the role which the patriarchy, root misogyny, and predatory behaviors play in traditional and conservative gender and sex norms to establish sex positivity. This begins with respect, consensual thought, and conduct. Behavior as simple as asking before acting; duly listening to a survivor's boundaries, triggers, and stories; and checking in with friends and survivors is critical in a sex-positive generation. By all means, destigmatize sex. Set boundaries, learn sexual health, widen the narrative; but do so with respect, understanding how your words may inadvertently affect survivors. (Source: SIECUS)

Anti-racism requires learning from past mistakes

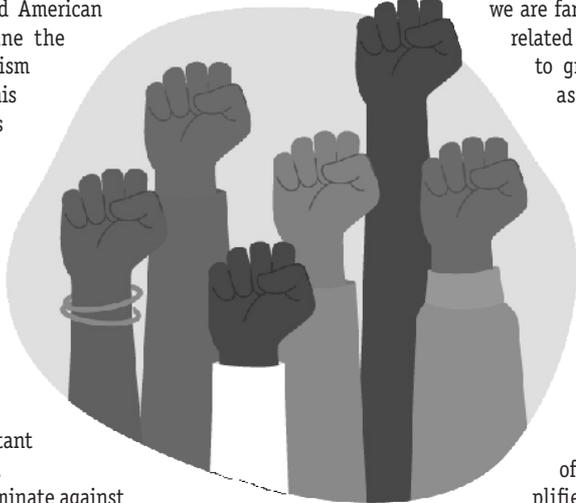
by Sonali Muthukrishnan
National/World Editor



In the past year and a half, movements against racism and xenophobia have forced American citizens to examine the deeply rooted racism in our country. This hatred permeates every piece of our society; from systemic issues to implicit bias, BIPOC face systematic obstacles, but these obstacles are now harder to identify. In many ways, racism is more subtle than before but no less present, making it more difficult to call out. A common defense of racist acts shows this clear evolution: that the person who acted in a racist manner did so unknowingly. Racism, whether it is intentional or not, is still racism, but it is important to allow people to grow from their mistakes.

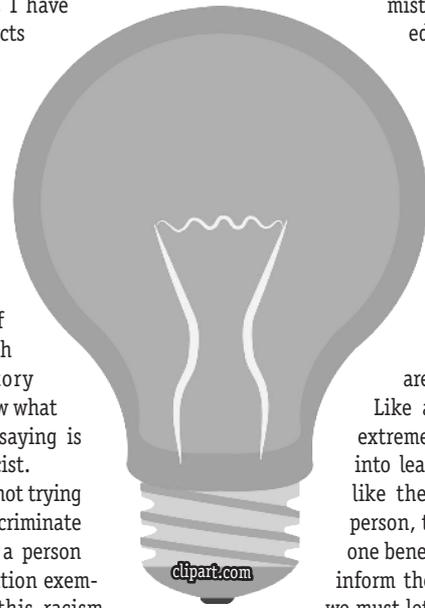
Suppose you call someone a slur or discriminate against someone in the BIPOC community. In that case, your actions are racist, but that does not necessarily make you a racist. Privilege is a learning curve; not everyone grows up around BIPOC or gets proper race

education. Regardless of my status as a person of color, I have learned so much this past year about racism and how it affects different people in the BIPOC community. People make mistakes; we are human, and we are far from perfect. Race-related education continues to grow and get better as we improve as a society, and I expect that it should continue for years to come. However, if you persist with your discriminatory actions, if you know what you are doing or saying is racist, you are a racist.



Even if you were not trying to be racist, if you discriminate in some way against a person of color, that discrimination exemplifies racism. However, this racism does not necessarily make you a racist.

With the prevalence of cancel culture, it is easy to define a person by their mistakes and ignore that they are trying to grow from their



A more forgiving approach to racism will allow our society to move forward on the racism front, allowing us to acknowledge, accept, and move forward from our country's systemic and societal racism.

mistakes. However, refusing to acknowledge that someone can change is also ignorance, just in a different form. We have to allow people to grow accordingly, which applies to all issues, especially racism. If someone is earnestly trying to change their mindset and grow from their ignorance, we should give them a chance. Our society can only benefit from giving that person a chance to right their wrongs.

Do not misunderstand me; there are racist actions that are unforgivable. Like an assumption based on race, less extreme actions are forgivable and can turn into learning moments. As much as it feels like the correct reaction is to shame this person, the reality of the situation is that no one benefits from it. Of course, we should still inform them that their actions are racist, but we must let them learn through their mistakes.

Romanticize your life

by Alex Evans
News Editor



Although cliches are considerably the biggest crime, it is so important to romanticize your life. Romanticization offers a remedy to fear of missing out, boredom, and inescapable emotions.

Especially with the coronavirus and shutdowns, I feel like all of these feelings are exacerbated. Before you surrender to sadness or the emptiness that has manifested in many, consider attempting to romanticize your life.

To each person, romanticizing your life could mean something different, so this is my definition: putting an emphasis on the joyful and beautiful moments in life rather than letting them pass you by. By this, I mean pay a little more attention to the actions or things that make you happy, and then work to incorporate them into your life more often.

An example of this in my life could be tanning. I really like spending time in the sun right when the seasons change so I make sure that it is a very special experience. I go out of my way to make a glass of lemonade or make a fruit platter and grab my favorite book. Overall, making one small experience much more aesthetically pleasing enhances its enjoyability.

The phrase "romanticizing your life" gets a bad reputation because of its association with people

who are obnoxious about it. By obnoxious, I just mean they shove it down everyone else's throat. Trust me, I do not need to see the thirteen thousandth Tik Tok about your night routine; we all get ready for bed.

This brings me to a major point about romanticization: it is something you should be doing for yourself. Because it is something that only impacts you — you're the one changing your routine and your mindset is different — it is an act that makes YOU happy. Again, this encourages the point that it is different for everyone. Therefore, it could take a while before someone finds something they enjoy doing or finds the internal motive. If it is just to flex to your Snapchat story with 47 random peers, are you really interested in some self care? Probably not.

Another way romanticization earns a bad rap is from the romanticization of things that should not be glorified. If the action is destructive to yourself or others, clearly that is not self care and should not be made "aesthetic" for enjoyment. One argument people commonly make for this is drug use, and the first thing that comes to mind is the HBO show Euphoria. Although the show displays the harms of drugs on the characters, it does make them appear euphoric and almost more glamorized, hence the name of the show.

Regardless of the hate it gets, romanticizing your life is a great way to make any day special. Next time you find yourself with a free moment in your day, I encourage you to take that time and make it extra special.



Require diverse critics

by Emmy Morely
National/World Editor



In the wake of the 2021 Academy Awards, where incredible motion pictures like Nomadland, Minari, and Judas and the Black Messiah were up for awards, I got to thinking about

the journey films take to get to the Academy Awards. More importantly, I thought about the thousands of films that are made each year, and the intensive critique process they endure. Film criticism does not always work on an equal playing field and can stunt the success of a film. As of 2020, male film critics outnumber female critics under every genre.

Martha Lauzen, Director of the Center for the Study of Women in Television at San Diego State University, found that men make up 83 percent of film critics. The male-dominated numbers appear in the majority of film categories, including action and animation. Beyond disproportionate gender representation, only 18 percent of male film critics are men of color, and only 23 percent of female film critics are women of color.

So why do these numbers matter? Criticism matters. As more women and people of color take director and producer roles in the film industry,

and minority stories begin to emerge, disproportionately white and male critics can damage the success of a film. That isn't to say that white men cannot review films, but if the main character of a film is a black woman and the subject matter is racism, predominately white men may not be the best critics to analyze the film, as they likely don't personally relate to the subject matter. It isn't that white men shouldn't review films, but instead that women and people of color deserve to be represented as well.

Brie Larson, the 2018 Women in Film award winner, said, "If you make a movie that is a love letter to women of color, there is an insanely low chance a woman of color will have a chance to see your movie, and review your movie." Larson's point stands. How can films made for women and people of color see widespread success if the majority of reviews are by people who may not relate to the subject matter?

People of color and women who have created films despite the odds stacked against them deserve to see their films accurately and fairly reviewed so their projects have an opportunity to reach greater audiences. In order for the film industry to encourage more on-screen representation, we need to see more representation in our critics as well. Diversity can begin with a film, but it should continue into criticism.



Understand issues before educating others

by Cara Davidson
Public Relations Manager



The most important tool to relieve the ignorance that clogs our culture is education. A lack of education is the partial cause of hate crimes, ingrained racism, and the discriminatory behaviors we encounter so frequently. People who don't face discrimination based

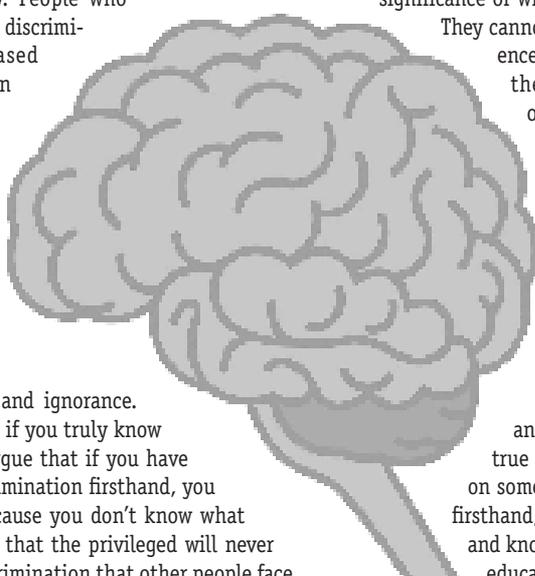
on their ancestry and privilege often respond to news about hate crimes with the words, "I didn't know." They do not know because they do not fear going outside, or watching their parents leave the house. If only they knew. We must make them know. We must educate. However, we must only educate if we know how.

It is important to understand the difference between education and ignorance. So I ask, please only educate others if you truly know what you're talking about. Some argue that if you have not experienced the hatred or discrimination firsthand, you cannot educate others about it because you don't know what you're talking about. While I agree that the privileged will never be able to truly understand the discrimination that other people face,

saying that they are not allowed to educate others simply adds to the collective lack of information that leads to ignorant thinkers. Obviously, someone who is privileged due to their ethnicity can never understand the struggle of someone who does face discrimination because of their roots. However, the privileged can still educate themselves on what is going on and educate others if they truly and deeply understand the significance of what they are learning about.

They cannot offer a firsthand experience, but they can educate themselves by searching out credible sources and listening to their peers who have experienced this discrimination firsthand. Those who understand the struggles of other communities but never do anything about it are performative activists.

However, if one is going to educate on other peoples' struggles, they MUST know what they're talking about and they must know that their facts are true and helpful. It's difficult to educate on something that you have not experienced firsthand, but it is possible ONLY if you do it correctly and know your facts completely. Those who choose to educate others on the struggles of whole communi-



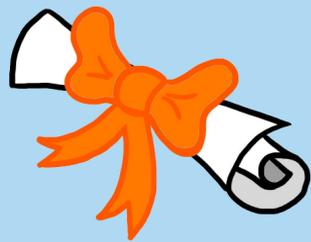
ties must first recognize their own privilege that they are able to educate and that they have not faced inequity due to their race. They must also be educated about the background and historical significance of the instances they are discussing.

Educators must recognize their own privilege to understand just how different they live given their gifted advantages.

When people who do not know what they're talking about try to educate others, they simply create a new group of misinformed thinkers. The falsely informed are the ones who grow up to be ignorant to the hate crimes that occur daily. Therefore, educators must be enlightened about cultural significance and their own privilege.

The difference between performative activism and genuine activism is the line between simply listening and standing on the sidelines, versus trying to educate their community and help the communities they are fighting for. Everyone must add to the education in any way they can, empowering silenced voices, being an ally, and enlightening others in any way they can.





Senior Destination Map



Congratulations, LGHS class of 2021!



- James Charles comes under fire
- EGRs: New music and TV

CULTURE

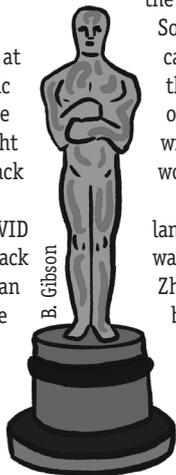
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2021 Oscars grace television despite pandemic

by **Emmy Morley**
National/World Editor

The 2021 Academy Awards kicked off on Apr. 25, hosted at Union Station in Los Angeles. The event began with a cinematic opening, following Regina King as she walked through the iconic station into the intimate ceremony and stage. The night showcased iconic films like *Nomadland*, *Judas and the Black Messiah*, *Minari*, and many more highly regarded works.

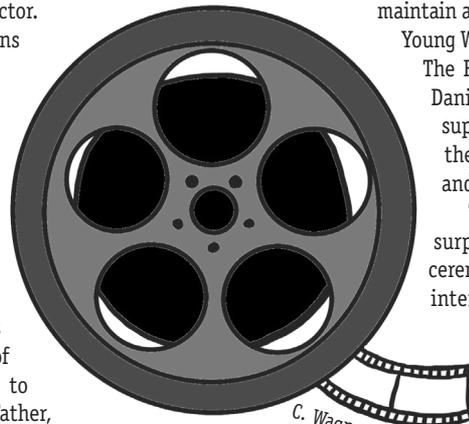
The 2021 Oscars adopted the industry standard of COVID safety measures — masks off when the camera rolls, then back on after cut — along with a significantly smaller ceremony than past years. The pandemic was not the only new addition to the Oscars, as the order of the awards was altered. Traditionally, best picture is the last award of the night. However, this year, best picture was presented prior to best actress and actor. The producer of the event, Steven Soderbergh, explained that the decision was made to take into consideration that



B. Gibson

the late Chadwick Boseman was up for best actor. Soderbergh stated, “When the nominations came out and there was even the possibility that Chadwick could win posthumously, our feeling was if he were to win and his widow were to speak on his behalf, there would be nowhere to go after that.”

The critically acclaimed film *Nomadland* won for best picture and best director was awarded to the film’s director Chloe Zhao, the first woman of color to win best director. *Nomadland* actress Francis McDormand also took home the title of best actress. Best actor was awarded to Anthony Hopkins for his role in *The Father*, though Hopkins was not present for the ceremony, as the Oscars had a strict ‘no zoom’ rule for the ceremony to



C. Wagner

maintain a sense of normalcy for viewers. Promising *Young Woman* won best original screenplay while *The Father* won for best adapted screenplay. Daniel Kaluuya and Youn Yuh-jung won best supporting actor and actress respectively for their roles in *Judas and the Black Messiah* and *Minari*.

Though the 2021 Academy Awards brought surprises and unprecedented changes, the ceremony was viewed by 10.4 million people internationally. With many heart-felt and inspiring films and speeches presented, the event persisted despite significant odds, and paid tribute to the talented films and creatives that were preserved.

(Sources: Vanity Fair, CNBC, IMDB)

Thimot covers girl in red’s latest album

by **Michaela Thimot**
National/World Editor

After years of gaining popularity by only releasing singles, Norwegian singer girl in red released her debut studio album, *i*, if it could make it go quiet. The pandemic delayed the release of her album, so her nearly 10 million Spotify listeners were overjoyed to hear the singer’s work after a long wait.

Marie Ulven is the face behind the name girl in red. Years ago, Ulven found that she had fallen in love with her best friend. To express her feelings and cope with the pain she felt of not being able to be with her, she picked up a guitar and wrote her debut song, *i wanna be your girlfriend*. In 2018, she uploaded the song and her fanbase rapidly grew.

The album contains 11 songs and adds up to about 33 minutes of indie pop music. Opening the album with her single *Serotonin*, Ulven puts intense and intrusive thoughts into words. The next songs — *Did You Come?* and *Body and Mind* — explain relationship troubles and the importance of knowing your self worth. She continues to stress the importance of loving yourself with tracks four and five: *hornylovesickness* and *midnight love*. The song following, *You Stupid B*tch*, takes an upbeat but angry tone as Ulven puts the pain of a past lover behind her. She wrote the next track, *Rue*, based on the character of the



B. Gibson

same name in HBO’s series *Euphoria* who struggles with drug addiction.

The rest of her album deals with relationship problems and getting over a past love. Even with all the trauma and darkness she expresses in the album, Ulven never fails to mention the importance of self love. Her songs provide comfort and escape, letting people know they are not alone.

While many artists work with others to write songs, Ulven is the sole songwriter as well as a co-producer of the album. Matias Tellez helped her with production and Finneas Eilish produced the only single on the album, *Serotonin*. Instead of using a record label, Ulven released it independently through AWAL, a company that allows artists to keep ownership of their music.

girl in red has been an important voice in the LGBTQIA+ community since the release of *i* *wanna be your girlfriend*. Her music describes the struggles associated with being queer, depression, and anxiety in a brutally honest but beautiful way. People have also been using her music as a code for identifying as part of the queer community. The phrase “Do you listen to girl in red?” has helped many wlw couples find each other without outing themselves to other people. (Sources: Redbrick, Pitchfork, The New Yorker)

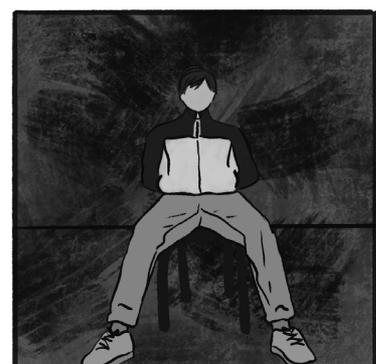
Louis Tomlinson plans upcoming tour

by **Sonali Muthukrishnan**
National/World Editor

On May 10, One Direction member-turned solo artist Louis Tomlinson announced that his world tour is back on for 2022. On Twitter, Tomlinson wrote, “Let’s try this one last time! All shows on my world tour will be moving back to 2022 and I’m excited to announce the first wave of new dates. I can’t wait to see you all soon, it’s going to be special!”

Tomlinson will travel to the USA, the UK, Australia, and Europe next year. In 2020, Tomlinson postponed his tour due to the COVID-19 pandemic to protect his loyal fans and those working to organize the tour. Tomlinson expressed his excitement at the prospect of getting back on the road, writing, “After all this time and years of waiting, this tour is going to be incredible, I can’t wait!” All current dates for the tour have been sold out, but Tomlinson added a date at London’s Wembley Arena as part of his announcement. This new show will replace his two sold-out shows at The Roundhouse, and tickets will transfer to Wembley. Tomlinson revealed that there would be more new dates to accommodate more of his fans.

The tour announcement came with the news that Tomlinson signed a global deal with Sony BMG to release his second album. The former One Direction member shared:



B. Gibson

“I’m very excited to start the next part of my journey with BMG.” The company philosophy includes creating transparent and fair deals with the artists and writers they service. On its website, BMG states that it is the “only significant international company to combine publishing and recordings under one roof.” They emphasize that their artists come first in every aspect of their business dealings.

Previously, the British singer had signed with Syco Music, founded by Simon Cowell. With Syco, Tomlinson released his debut solo album, *Walls*, which peaked at number four in the United Kingdom, totaling over one billion streams. *Walls* included masterpieces like *Two of Us*, *Defenceless*, *Habit*, and *Only the Brave*. As a One Direction member, Tomlinson also had a hand in the 100 million record sales created by the five albums the band released with Syco.

Commenting on his upcoming album, Tomlinson shared, “I feel like a new artist now,” he says. “It’s taken a while for me to be comfortable on my own, to learn to trust my gut and make sure I get what I want. I feel the most confident I’ve ever been, both as a songwriter and a singer, and the most mature. Of course I want to be successful, but what matters is what my music means to me and what it means to the fans. That’s the priority. The rest we’ll have to wait and see.” (Sources: Music Week, BMG, Billboard)

Predatory behavior allegations surface against James Charles

by **Georgia Kaufman**
Humor Editor

CW: Predatory behavior, sexual misconduct with minors

YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok communities have “cancelled” James Charles — beauty influencer and world-famous internet personality — for alleged cases of sexual harassment and pedophilia to children 14-16 years of age. YouTube demonetized Charles’ videos after over 15 teenage boys came forward with allegations over the past few weeks. The influencer has since become inactive from all social media platforms.

A popular podcast known as *Frenemies*, produced by H3H3 productions and hosted by Ethan Klein and Trisha Paytas, has done research and called out Charles since Mar.

2, talking openly about the beauty influencer’s predatory behavior.

On Apr. 1, Charles released a YouTube video titled, “Holding Myself Accountable.” The video highlighted Charles alone and at night as he spoke about the issues outlined by *Frenemies*. He claimed he had used the apps Instagram and TikTok as “dating apps.” He then went on to explain his encounters with minors as a result of being desperate. He states, “It is ridiculously embarrassing to admit this, but I think I



B. Gibson

have to... I’m desperate.” After Charles posted the video, Klein tweeted, “James Charles claims he’s ‘desperate’ as an excuse for sexting with minors. I think the truth is more insidious and something he could never admit publicly, that he likes young boys. At this point the police need to be involved and there isn’t really much more to say about it.”

In Charles’ apology video, he claimed that he asked the minors how old they were, and each of them responded 18+. He reflected that he “trusted the information that was given to [him] rather than the information [he] could have and

should have gotten for [himself.]” However, a number of the victims shared that Charles never asked for their age. In response to an iPhone-note written apology and explanation, one of Charles’ first accusers said directly to Charles, “James we both know I blocked you [and] you never asked for my age. After I told you I was 16 you proceeded to ask me for nudes and said it didn’t matter. You called me hot and said ‘I wish the timeline could speed up so you can be 18.’”

This is not the first time Charles has been accused of predatory behavior towards minors. In May 2019, Tati Westbrook — fellow beauty influencer — called James out on his inappropriate actions toward a worker at her birthday party. The video titled “BYE SISTER” received millions of views, but James’ scripted response with evidence to prove his innocence against Tati’s claims caused her to archive her video; however, as his response video came to a close, the YouTuber promised to do better with his behavior toward young men.

Since the allegations, YouTube Red’s TV show, *Instant Influencer*, that James hosted for the first season has dropped Charles; Zach Hsieh will be replacing him in Season Two. The makeup brand *Morphe* also came to a “mutual agreement” with Charles, expressing that they will no longer be selling his makeup palette (released in 2018), and that they will be dropping their long-time partnership with the YouTuber. (Sources: Twitter, YouTube)

EGR: Kenny and more

The Trial of the Chicago 7: The Academy Award nominated historical legal drama, *The Trial of the Chicago 7*, perfectly captures the atmosphere of the politically charged 1960s. A powerful and moving depiction of the famous 1969 trial in which a group of Anti-Vietnam War protesters fight to prove their innocence, *The Trial of the Chicago 7* not only displays the political tension within the courtroom, but the political tension throughout the nation. Accused of inciting a bloody clash with police outside the 1968 Democratic National Convention, the defendants face injustice after injustice in a virtually groundless case. Especially meaningful in a new era of political divide, *The Trial of the Chicago 7* is a beautiful film well worth watching.

-Brynn Gibson, *Graphics Designer*

The Irregulars: *The Irregulars*, released on Netflix on Mar. 26, is a unique and magical take on the classic story of Sherlock Holmes. Four teenagers in the slums of Victorian England find themselves involved in a supernatural disturbance stemming from deep within the city. In addition, a wealthy boy who takes interest in the group sneaks out of his home in order to befriend them. The group of five meets Dr. John Watson, who recruits the teens to solve cases throughout London. They soon discover that these cases have a pattern — and that everything is not what it seems. The show features a diverse cast and a unique plot that keeps the audience engaged and invested. I highly recommend this for people who love shows about the supernatural and magic.

-Alia Arafah, *Editorial Editor*

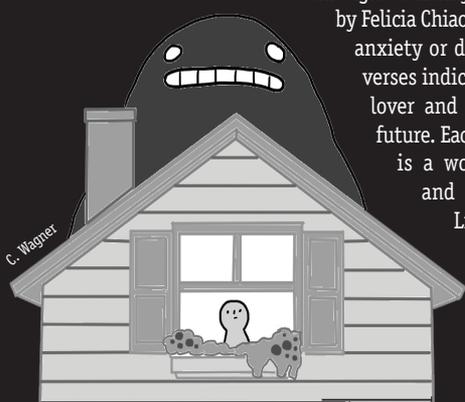
1950: King Princess' single, *1950*, openly addresses the queer experience over the course of history. The song, filled with meaningful lyrics, pulls back the curtain on the strain of closeted relationships: the coldness, doubt, and insecurity that can arise. King Princess' raspy alto voice is the perfect addition to the track, adding a deeply emotional feel to the song. The song *1950* confronts the reality that many queer people used to face and still face today — that LGBTQIA+ identities are not accepted by everyone. The song encapsulates the isolation, longing, and emotional strain that being in the closet can have on the queer community, making it extremely relevant.

-Sonal Muthukrishnan, *National/World Editor*

Kenny: In one word, indie pop musician Still Woozy's new single *Kenny* feels melancholic. Released on Apr. 29 with an accompanying music video premiering on Apr. 30, his latest song explores the nuances of an imperfect relationship between emotionally unavailable partners. Despite the looming mass that appears throughout *Kenny*'s music video, animated by Felicia Chiao, the song doesn't hint at anxiety or dread; instead, its forlorn verses indicate resignation to a past lover and hopelessness about the future. Each shot of the music video is a work of art, tying lyrics and instrumentals together.

Listen now on your preferred music platform to support Still Woozy and Chiao's collaborative work.

-Sophie Sullivan, *Opinion Editor*



C. Wagner

by Jordan Chan

News Editor

In the real world, it's no surprise when pieces of art and other various original collectibles sell for thousands, even millions, of dollars. There is only one Mona Lisa, and if you consider the French Republic an owner, there is only one owner of the Mona Lisa. The same cannot be said about the digital world.

We share songs, memes, and gifs as many times as we want to, and everybody who shares or receives this content seems to have their hands on the same thing. Or, at least, that is what most people think.

In March, however, a digital artist named Mike Winkelmann under the alias Beeple sold a collage of art for 69 million dollars, launching the NFT craze. The JPG file containing that collage is called an NFT, or non-fungible token. NFTs authenticate an individual's ownership of a digital work by using Blockchain technology. They are a way for



artists to take something like a meme with infinite production value and turn it into something unique and irreplaceable. Think of it as a trading card with a little barcode that says someone's card is the "real" version. The public can still access the collectible, but technically, only one person or group owns the real piece.

It's not just digital art: just about anything can be an NFT. Winkelmann explained, "At the end of the day, if somebody will pay for it, then you can sell it." The co-founder of Twitter auctioned his first tweet off as an NFT. Bands can sell albums as NFTs. Some have even sold physical objects as NFTs. Even memes can rake in the big bucks. The Nyan Cat meme sold for almost \$600,000, and the Disaster Girl meme sold for 500,000 dollars.

Although this "NFT mania" is relatively new, the idea of cryptocurrency and the technology behind NFTs are not. This raises the question: why are people starting to use NFTs? What is the big deal?

Arafah reviews The Man Who Sold His Skin

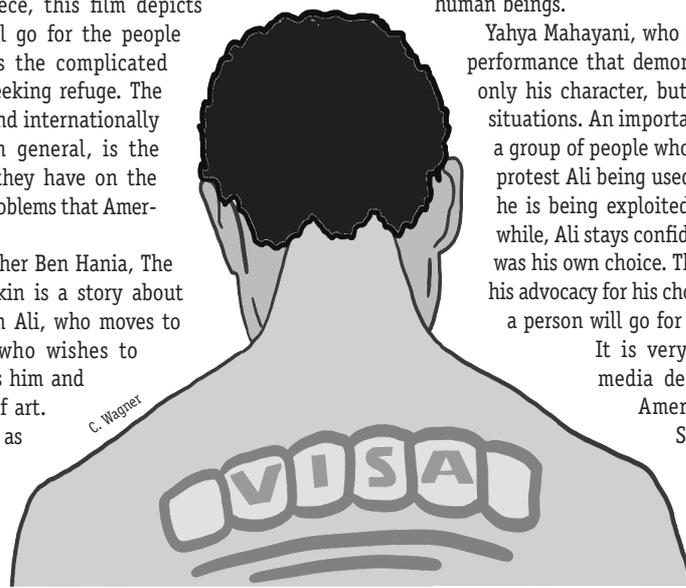
by Alia Arafah

Editorial Editor

The Man Who Sold His Skin, an Oscar-nominated Tunisian movie, explores the topics of love, human desperation, and art. Featuring a skilled cast and a dramatic take on a real-life art piece, this film depicts how far someone will go for the people they love and covers the complicated topic of travel and seeking refuge. The beauty of this film, and internationally produced pictures in general, is the distinct perspective they have on the world, highlighting problems that Americans often overlook.

Directed by Kaouther Ben Hania, *The Man Who Sold His Skin* is a story about a Syrian refugee, Sam Ali, who moves to Lebanon; an artist who wishes to tattoo Ali's back buys him and sells him as a piece of art. Ali agrees to this deal, as becoming an art piece will allow him to enter Europe, where his former girlfriend lives.

This story is based on the piece *Tim* by Wim Delvoye. Tim Steiner sold his back to Delvoye — an artist known for his unconventional methods — who then tattooed and displayed *Tim* in galleries across the world. The art piece sparked a debate over bodily autonomy and whether or not it is humane to consider *Tim* to be art.



C. Wagner

While in real life the tattoo was of a madonna figure and other symbols, Sam Ali's tattoo is a Schengen Visa spanning across his entire back. This symbolizes the character's struggle with immigrating out of Syria and shows the irony in how material goods can travel the world more easily than human beings.

Yahya Mahayani, who plays Ali, delivers a beautiful performance that demonstrates the hardships of not only his character, but of many refugees in similar situations. An important aspect of the movie is that a group of people who advocate for Syrian refugees protest Ali being used as a canvas. They claim that he is being exploited for being a refugee; all the while, Ali stays confident in the fact that the tattoo was his own choice. The protagonist's sacrifices and his advocacy for his choices show the means to which a person will go for love.

It is very uncommon that American media depicts the struggles of non-American people. *The Man Who Sold His Skin* is a raw, uncut take on the reality of war and what it's like to be from a country ravaged by it. It is incredibly important to have such perspectives and for people to listen and attempt to understand them. Overall, the film is both beautiful and sad, yet hopeful. Ideally, movies like this and the fictional story of Sam Ali can work to bring awareness to the condition of the world and maybe eventually help to fix it.

(Sources: *The Guardian*, *The Independent*)

Sun examines Shadow and Bones TV adaptation

by Esther Sun

Editor-in-Chief

Having been disappointed by many book-to-film adaptations in the past (*cough* *Percy Jackson* *cough*

), I fully prepared myself for a *Grishaverse* TV series that did not live up to its literary counterpart. Thankfully, I was pleasantly surprised.

Netflix's recently-released series *Shadow and Bone* feels like a dream come true, with episodes I know I would have devoured even if I hadn't previously been a fan of the book series.

The casting, costumes, and set design all fall beautifully in line with the book depictions, undoubtedly thanks to *Shadow and Bone* author Leigh Bardugo's central role in the production. I loved the twist on my expectations about Inej, whose black hood characterized her stealth in the books; in the TV show, South Asian actress Amita Suman plays Inej and wears a black hijab, rather than the traditional European-style hood many may have assumed she would wear.

Beyond the visual elements of the show, the pacing of the plot also works incredibly well in engaging the viewer. Just like the books, the show alternates between scenes in different storylines: Alina's preparation for fame at the Little Palace; the kidnapping mission of Kaz, Inej, and Jesper; and the developing relationship between Nina and Mattias on the ship to Fjerda. Other than minor aspects of the story that feel underdeveloped, such as Alina's training with Baghra and her

process of practicing her powers, the representation of each storyline feels just right.

Onto the characters themselves: the classic relationship competition between Darkling and Malina is very enticing, with both Kirigan and Mal coming off as equally appealing choices for Alina. Whereas the books don't develop Mal's character very well separate from his interactions with Alina, the TV series reveals the depth of Mal's feelings for Alina when she lives away from him at the Little Palace, as well as the core childhood connection between Mal and Alina. The slow-burn romance between Kaz and Inej also leaves viewers waiting for more heated developments in the next seasons.

Beyond romance, Jesper's character serves as fantastic comic relief, in one instance hugging a goat with him on the terrifying trip through the Fold (though this detail grows to be a bit overdone given the number of references to it later on).

Ultimately, I would recommend the *Shadow and Bone* Netflix series to anyone who enjoys a classic coming-of-age adventure story set against a fantastical, magical backdrop. I can't imagine having to wait another year or so for a second season, but I'm also confident that, no matter what, this show is worth the wait.



C. Wagner

Chan details how non-fungible tokens are affecting the digital world

by Jordan Chan

News Editor

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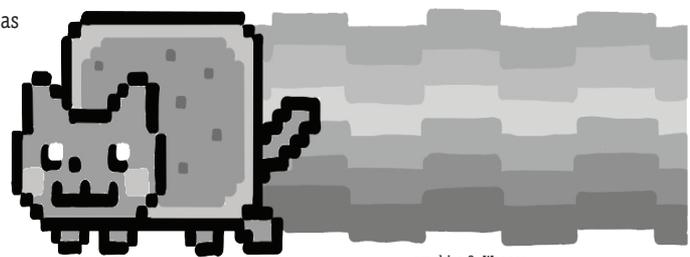
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graphics C. Wagner

For buyers, it may be about simple bragging rights. They may also purchase NFTs to diversify their investments amidst an uncertain market. Perhaps some just want to hop on the bandwagon. Critics worry about whether NFTs are here to stay, but so far, research shows that these tokens will have long-term value.

For sellers, excitement stems from the fact that NFTs add an element of scarcity to their work. It's especially evident with digital artists, who have long struggled with the public undervaluing their work. They can finally give original pieces significant financial value and receive the credit they deserve. Andrew Benson, an artist who supports himself predominantly with a non-art-related day job, stated, "For a long time, my perspective has been that the best way to survive as an artist is to not have to survive as an artist." NFTs have encouraged Benson, along with many others, to change that view.

(Sources: *CNBC*, *Washington Post*, *NPR*, *Time*, *NY Times*)

- Holland roasts Spotify playlists
- Gibson rates Surfs Up characters

HUMOR

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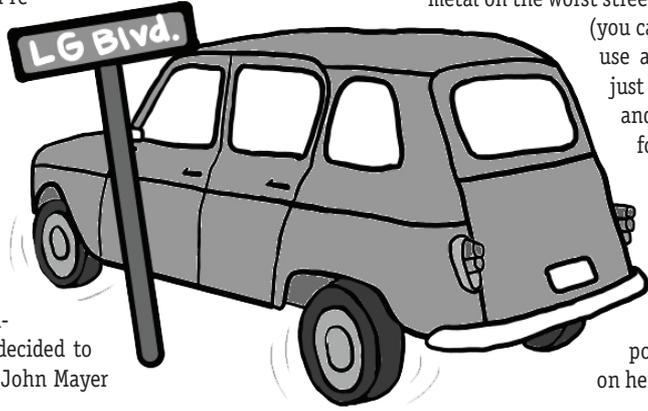
Holland stalks and evaluates her friends' Spotify playlists

by Lucy Holland
Culture Editor

I love Spotify. Not just for being Spotify and perfect and wonderful, but also because people tend to forget that playlists and listening activity is fully public. Many people (me) are way too comfortable making hyper specific niche playlists with far too personal descriptions. So here we go, I'm going to rate some fellow staffers' public playlists.

Sad Taylor, by Jackie King, Humor Editor

Heeey Jackie, you're probably editing this right now; don't cut this please. I'm genuinely a little concerned. Not because it's a playlist solely devoted to Taylor Swift, because you already have at least five other ones that are public (and probably a dozen others that are private), but because you decided to put like six songs about John Mayer



on a playlist with three John Mayer songs on it. To the biggest Swiftie I know, please cool it with the John Mayer; Dear John is literally on this playlist.

Speeding on LG Blvd, by Brynn Gibson, Graphics Designer

First of all, Mr. G, look away. Brynn absolutely does not speed on LG Blvd; do not fret. Now Brynn, just wanted to ask, what about Ribs by Lorde makes you wanna put the pedal to the metal on the worst street in this gosh darn town (you can look now Mr. G I didn't use a no-no word). Next time, just call the playlist all of Dayglow and Maggie Rodger's discography and forgo the speeding ticket.

bzubzubzzshhh, by Ethan Sanders, People Editor

Hey Ethan, you doin' ok? In your own words, this playlist is "boooooommmbr-shhh" and tbh I get it. The RUDE Zedd Remix goes surprisingly hard, but you lose points for unironically having Dance Monkey on here. Not sure if Dance Monkey is balanced out



graphics C. Wagner

by Memories (feat. Kid Cudi), but you did a good job with the white girl dance music.

this is my 5-hour long emo playlist, by Sophie Sullivan, Opinion Editor

Soph, Sophie, Soap. This is a playlist with the full discography of Panic! At The Disco, My Chemical Romance, Twenty One Pilots, and Fall Out Boy. I can't really say much about this playlist, because I have shamelessly lost my voice with you listening to Teenagers, so I just want the world to know that it exists.

Curing My Depression, by Georgia Kaufman, Humor Editor

Description: "Stop asking me if I'm ok after seeing this playlist." How Deep is Your Love by the Bee Gees 69 times. Enough said.

Emily Duvall's listening history, by Emily Duvall, Culture Editor

Ms. Duvall, it's embarrassing enough that you use Apple Music, but I simply cannot get over the fact that 8 of your top 10 songs of 2021 are GLEE CAST VERSIONS. EMILY. WHY. WHY ON PLANET EARTH ARE YOU LISTENING TO RACHEL BERRY SING DON'T RAIN ON MY PARADE. (Source: Spotify *follow me* lucyholland)

Narcissism is a serious issue

by Georgia Kaufman
Humor Editor

They lied. They did it! They fooled all of you. After the fact, I was hoping to see Jonathan Quiñones from What Would You Do, but instead, I was stuck in a position of WWTPD. What Would Trisha Paytas Do? Cry on the kitchen floor? Probs, but not the answer I was looking for, thank you very much.

Hello. My name is Georgia Grace Kaufman, and I am a survivor of having a humongous ego. I know it sounds irrational and dumb, but it's real. Too real. Life is hard when you're the sexiest person in the world. I would know, because it's me. Even my humor is all about myself, but this, sweetheart, ain't no joke. Darn tootin it ain't.

I like to think that I give off young, cool, and silly vibes. Unfortunately for me, I have been discouraged when people tell me I give off the vibes of a "75-year-old woman stuck inside a 16-year-old's body." I just want to be a silly goose :(Sorry that you all get offended at the fact that I can strike up a conversation with the boomers. I didn't choose this life. This life chose me. Obviously and rightfully so, I'm cool and hot.

So cool, in fact, that I inspired Bruno Mars and Anderson Paak's Leave The Door Open. Peter Gene Hernandez really wants to get it, I guess.



courtesy Wallpapers Pick

Unfortunately, much like bad little boy **Ethan Sanders** and world-renowned arson enthusiast **Alaina Fox**, Hernandez stands at a towering 3'7", so his opportunity? In Rhode Island.

I also have a God Complex when it comes to music taste, so that helps my attractiveness a lot. But not too much; I am already hot!

Do you know anyone else who listens to and enjoys the majority of the Backyardigans soundtrack? Didn't think so.

Going back to the beginning of this article, someone did lie to me, and they lied hard. "Confidence makes you hotter." That is not true. Um hello? Some people are just ugly, sorry not sorry xx. Dula Peep is Levitating? Well I am standing my ground. I am hot. You are not.

I mean obviously if you're like me, you have plenty of confidence and never find yourself listening to your Curing My Depression playlist on Spotify (@georkaufma) that contains The Bee Gees' How Deep Is Your Love 69 times. Obviously. So why would people need to fake it 'til they make it in terms of confidence? Just like yourself lol.

So what was the sole purpose of this article? Honestly I just needed a place to talk about myself more. If you think you just wasted your time reading this, you're wrong. King Charles I of England would have loved this article and I know that for a fact. Man was such a silly goose. RIP that ayyyyyyyy.

We must avoid these trends

by Maya Gomez
People Editor

As summer rapidly approaches, thoughts of hot days and cold drinks occupy many of our minds. However, do you really want to look back years from now and see a 16-year-old version of yourself in animal printed tights through your Snapchat memories? I sure don't. So how do we determine what trends should stay? Here are some things I pray I won't have to see again this summer. You're welcome.

Bermuda shorts

Unless you're a 12-year-old who shops in the children's section at Target, please, for the love of God, get rid of the bermuda-style shorts. Sell them, donate them, throw them in the trash for all I care, but get them out of your closets. If you want to wear something that looks like you cut a pair of skinny jeans with a rusty pair of scissors, go look up five-minute crafts on YouTube.

Flip flops with ankle straps

I'm all for breathable footwear. In fact, I've been a proud owner of both flip flops and crocs over the past 16 years. However, do you really need an extra 10 inches of fabric wrapped around your ankle connected to the flip flop? It serves no purpose. It looks tacky and it feels bizarre. Go burn them or something.

VSCO-girl look

The summer of 2019 was a dark time for all of us. Who told us that the messy bun, oversized t-shirt, and Hydroflask in hand was a cute look? Not to mention the six velvet

scrunchies trailing up girls' arms. Trying to be aware of global warming and preaching metal straws while putting them into our plastic Venti pink drink cups from Starbucks really wasn't our best move. We weren't creative, we weren't cute, and the huge shirt-tiny shorts combination looked like seventh graders trying to replicate a walk of shame outfit without having any previous knowledge about what a walk of shame actually is.

Bike shorts

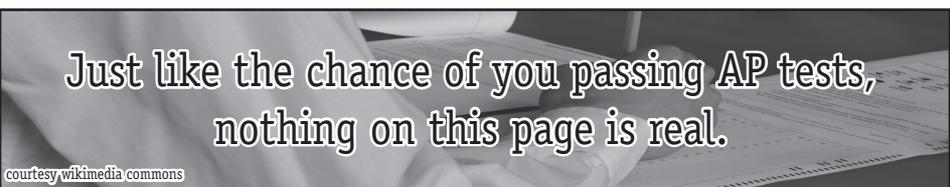
I will never, ever, feel the need to intervene with the slandering of bike shorts. They give off the same vibe as bermuda-style shorts, but after being soaked by the rain. They're tight and they look cheap, yet are priced for 25 dollars on Depop. What is it with our generation that we always feel the need to take articles of clothing that have specific purposes and decide to pair them with a sweater vest? C'mon guys, seriously?

Anything that has puns about summertime (ALAINA FOX EXEMPT)

Don't worry, I won't judge you adults too hard, but since you have such a bone to pick with us, I thought it was only fair! I can only hope that no one above the age of nine would dare place anything that has a pun about summertime on their body. It's not 2017 anymore, friends, and if I have to see one more millennial wearing a cheap t-shirt that says "Shell Yeah, Beaches!" I will quite literally lose it. Apparently, the Forever 43 shop has been shut down, sorry! Should I make the condolence card out to Karen and Richard?



C. Wagner



Just like the chance of you passing AP tests, nothing on this page is real.

courtesy/wikimedia commons

Stardew Valley might ruin your life, but it is worth it

by Alaina Fox and Sofia Rossi
Editor-in-Chief and News Editor

Hey, you! Do you want to end up with 17 missing assignments and concerned emails from your teachers? Do you want to spend a few minutes on a game after school, only to look up later and realize it's going on 2:00 AM? Do you want to cope with unresolved mental health issues by using a pixelated character to vicariously live out your dreams — namely having a loving relationship, going to bed at a reasonable hour, and overthrowing capitalism via an anarcho-communist revolution? Well then, you want some pretty weird things, to be honest, but you're not alone! In this comprehensive, but not even slightly comprehensible guide, your resident farmers/miners/fishers/ranchers/fighters, Sofia and Alaina, will walk you through all there is to know about the game Stardew Valley.

The first thing to be aware of is gifting. Just like in real life, you can and must buy your friendships. As you throw miscellaneous objects into random villagers' hands, be sure to track how they respond to various items. With all manners of a wealthy nobleman who spent their youth in etiquette classes, many will respond to unliked gifts with blatant disgust and hostility. Until you work up a high enough relationship level, enjoy kind, thoughtful compliments

from the townspeople such as "Hmm. If it weren't for those clothes, you might actually be pretty... Actually, nevermind." Another of our favorites is "What do you want from me? Money? I'll give you a pot of gold to leave me alone!" It's dialogue like this that really warms our hearts, reminding us why we find such comfort in this lovely, relaxing farming sim.

Another important note for first-time players is that if your character stays out too late, at 2:00 AM, they will suddenly fall unconscious wherever they are. If only falling asleep was that easy in real life. If this happens, the game feels the need to punish you, so you will be robbed — either by a mystery thief rifling through your possessions or the town doctor charging you one thousand dollars to



courtesy flickr

carry you to a bed. Similarly, if your health bar falls too low while you're fighting off monsters in the mines, you'll die. But no worries, as the miserly, greedy, sadistic doctor will once again bleed you dry in exchange for revival. At that point, we'd honestly rather our characters just die.

Keeping in line with the cutesy, wholesome premise of the game, Stardew Valley also surprises you with fun information about characters' backstories and interests as you develop your friendships with them. For example, you'll learn that the sculptor Leah moved away from the city to pursue her interest in art, the poet Elliot hopes to write a novel, and the mayor Lewis appropriates tax revenue to commission gold statues of himself. You'll also have the opportunity to help characters out with their various struggles, such as scavenging for daffodils, gathering wood, or overcoming alcoholism and depression. Isn't it great when a game maintains a consistent vibe?

Now, it may be true that one of the authors has over 300 hours of playtime despite having acquired the game in November. It may be true that this game can ruin your life, but it's also true that you can give your in-game spouse a little kiss every day and see a little heart pop up, so really, it's worth it all.

Morley comes to school : Fortnite addictions return

by Emmy Morley

National/World Editor

As our school slowly transitions from a deserted ghost town to a bustling spot that can only be compared to a TJ Maxx on a Sunday, I've taken notice of many of our school safety measures to avoid COVID. While they may seem smart in theory, they don't always apply super well to the real world.

Starting off with a biggie: the arrows. Much like Miss Dixie D'Amelio's music career, this concept looked good on paper, but is now a hot mess. The arrows work just fine in the hallway, but when you hit any stairwell, it's game over.

Ever seen the rolling 7/11 Taquitos all crammed together in the heating case, just looking all contaminated?

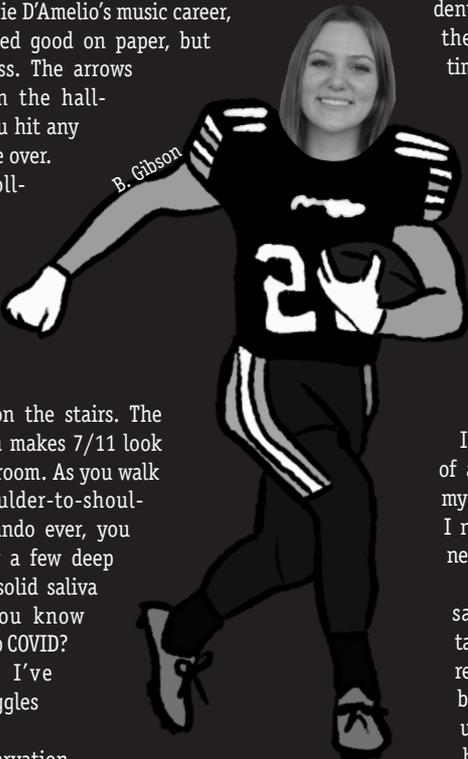
Similar concept on the stairs. The stairwell situation makes 7/11 look like an operating room. As you walk (or shuffle) shoulder-to-shoulder with every rando ever, you are sure to enjoy a few deep inhales of good, solid saliva particles. But you know what is sure to stop COVID? Those arrows. I've heard COVID struggles with directions.

Now for the starvation issue. I know the goal of removing lunch and break periods was to prevent students from congregating, and I'm not sure you've seen the quad in-between classes, but Coughy the Congregation Cat should be our

new school mascot. Bottom line is: if you have a seventh period, you aren't eating until 2 P.M. I'm hungry halfway through my first period. By fifth, I'm ready to eat my own spleen. If I had a seventh period, I would become a safety concern. Now, in between classes, I inhale a Clif bar like a malnourished hyena and dream of a bagel in my next class.

The bathrooms. Oh, the bathrooms. I remember hearing that only one student was supposed to enjoy the pee palace at a given time, but unfortunately my bladder is the size of a peanut and doesn't wait for COVID guidelines to give it the thumbs-up. Once in the bathroom, we hit Issue Number Two: pushing past the group standing and talking next to the mirrors. I simply channel the spirit of an NFL linebacker, lower my shoulder, and get where I need to be by any means necessary.

COVID is a struggle bus saga. The protocols certainly don't help and only really succeed in giving me bathroom-anxiety and upping my step count by the end of the day following those arrows. But if it makes admin happy, cheers, I guess? Gotta throw them a bone sometimes. Anyway, stay contaminated, kiddos.



B. Gibson

by Alexandra Evans

News Editor

During quarantine I have fallen into old habits, and I must come clean. Fortnite consumes my life. Coping with free time is something I have never handled well, whether I go on a 13-hour crochet bender to finish my third consecutive hat, or am gaming into the night allowing Victory Royales to consume my life between 9 P.M. and 5 A.M. Something about the rush of wiping out squads only to come in 11th place for the 15th consecutive round really strikes my interest.

My Fortnite routine is something I do not take lightly. Step one in the Fortnite regimen is to party up; my typical squad includes fellow El Gatan **Cara Davidson**, otherwise known as muddeeplayz. I am just going to speed past adding people since I flaunt my brother's username, courtesy his 2017 hypebeast phase (just kidding, please add me, it is SupremeStorm16 or something like that). Once we're in the game, I must obnoxiously flex the dances and skins my brother binge bought, again a few years back during the Fortnite peak. I think he forked out a minimum of 400 dollars on that game... Anyway, once we're in the game we MUST land at Misty Meadows, no exceptions.



C. Wagner

Now, priority number one — once we have landed we must find the girl-boss car. You are probably now wondering, what does this mean? The girl-boss car is much more than a car. It's an experience — a necessity. The girl-boss car is a pink or purple Fortnite car, the only acceptable ones. Fortnite cars are everything I love in life: driving fast and blasting music.

I think the best thing that Fortnite could have ever done was make Fortnite radio, which is the Fortnite car playing music once you're in it. Different stations are available, so pick your poison: EDM Junkee, I am Indie and Everyone Must Know It, In Search of Levitating ft. Dababy, Radiohead Stan, or I Grew Up in the Midwest. Just kidding, those aren't the actual stations, just how I will judge you based on your favorite (P.S. Rock & Royale supremacy).

All of this aside, the Fortnite car radio must be laced with something other than The Strokes guitar melodies. For some reason, the music just hits different when compared to any other way to listen. Genuinely, streaming services need to watch out, because between the girl-boss car, Fortnite Rock & Royale Radio, and myself, there is no going back.

As you can see, the cars and the music are enough to keep me interested, because I do not win many games. When I do though, I can sense all dignity leaving my body and my eighth grade mentality flooding my brain — I quickly snap a pic and post to my snapchat story, making sure everyone knows the massive feat I have accomplished. Started in Misty Meadows, now I'm here.

Gibson enjoys and rates many characters of Surf's Up

by Brynn Gibson

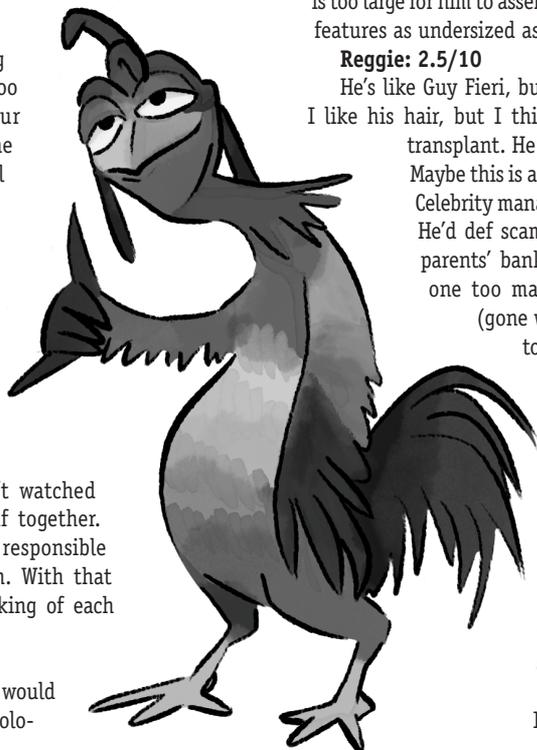
Graphics Designer

It's a Saturday in 2010. You're wearing a Disney princess t-shirt, eating mac and cheese off of your giraffe Zoo Pal plate, and sifting through your DVDs with sticky fingers to find the perfect movie to watch. What will it be? Shark Tale? Flushed Away? Over The Hedge? Just as you are about to give up and resort to playing with your Zuzu pets, you spot an absolute unit of a movie: Surf's Up.

This movie recently enjoyed a glorious three month stint on Netflix (during which I watched it about twenty or so times) and I've developed very strong opinions about each character. If you haven't watched the movie, you need to pull yourself together. Maybe try YesMovies.com? I'm not responsible if your computer gets a virus though. With that being said, here is my definitive ranking of each main character in Surf's Up.

Glen: 1/10

Glen reminds me of my brother. He would 100 percent eat my bagel and not apolo-



gize, and that's why he's rated lowest. Also, his head-to-face ratio is too large for him to assert authority over anyone. Anyone with facial features as undersized as his has no right to be that loud.

Reggie: 2.5/10

He's like Guy Fieri, but if he went moldy from the inside. I like his hair, but I think he'd benefit from a personality transplant. He also gives me prank YouTuber vibes. Maybe this is a career change for him down the road? Celebrity manager turned invader of personal space? He'd def scam young children into draining their parents' bank accounts to pay for merch. After one too many "FART PRANK ON STRANGER!! (gone wrong)" videos, I think he'd retire to prison for tax evasion.

Mikey: 4/10

As perfectly evident throughout the film, Mikey is about six months shy of his mid-life crisis. Bonus points for his speedy legs, but if I was in the movie, I would've stepped on him, maybe on purpose, maybe an accident. The world may never know.

Lani: 5.5/10

I have nothing funny to say about her,

because she is just that uninspiring. However, her baby photo looks eerily similar to my own.

Cody: 7/10

Cody is the type of kid who makes the lacrosse team and never plays, but still finds it necessary to post Instagram stories about game day. I vibe with his hair though.

Big Z/"Geek": 8/10

Big Z is a perfectly likeable guy. Mad respect to him for simply giving up when times got too tough and retiring to a beachside shack. However, I simply cannot overlook the fact that no one thought that Big Z and Geek were the same penguin. They literally have the same face. This makes me more infuriated than when Miley put on a blonde wig to become Hannah Montana and was suddenly unrecognizable to the public.

Tank: 9/10

His desire to kick toddlers? I relate.

Chicken Joe: 10000/10

Chicken Joe is my phone lockscreen. I aspire to put in as little effort and have as much success as that chicken. He is the only thing from Wisconsin I like.



graphics B. Gibson

Rao struggles with dreaded LGHS senior parking lot

by Revanth Rao

Sports Editor

It's a beautiful day outside, and you have to leave your house to go to school. Because you live a whopping 500 feet away from the high school, you have to drive to avoid the freezing, sub-zero temperatures of a Los Gatos morning in the spring. Unfortunately, when you hop into your car, you realize you're facing a terrible fate: your car is running out of gas.

You wonder, "How could this have possibly happened to me? I swear it was practically full just yesterday?" Well, it wasn't just stolen by the gas gods. Here's the breakdown of where it all went:

Senior Lot: Ah, the dreaded senior lot. You park behind the school to save time walking to

your car, and somehow it takes longer to leave school and get home than if you parked your car in Nebraska. Even if you somehow got to your car before school ends, you'd still be stuck in the mind numbing traffic. The senior lot sucks away your soul slowly but surely by making you spend hours on end waiting to go as other seniors, teachers, grandparents, construction workers, UPS trucks, and everyone else in the state of California get to leave before you. Even though you don't actually go anywhere for four hours, the senior lot is a very important reason why your tank is always bordering on empty.

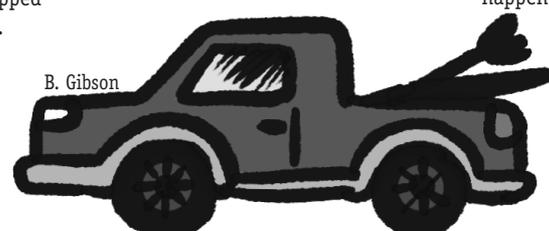
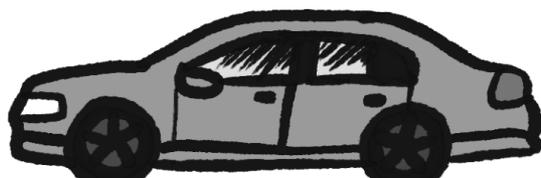
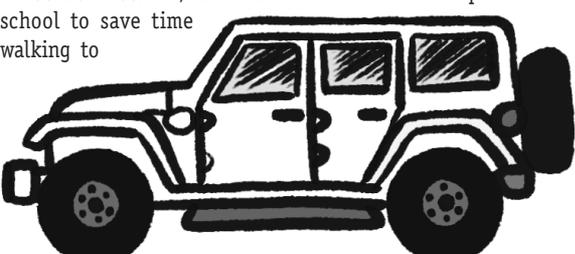
Starbucks: After spending a year getting out of the senior lot, you're starving. So you decide to go to Starbucks. But the one right here in Los Gatos doesn't give you the extra large coffee with 12 shots of espresso and a whole can's worth of whipped cream. So you have to drive 20 miles to find one that does.

But that's not really a big deal at this point. What's another hour on the road when you just spent four trying to leave school?

The Store: Now that you've gotten through Starbucks, you realize that your extra fancy lime green feather pen that you have to dip into a bottle of ink to use just broke. Even though all your homework is done on your computer, there's obviously no way that you could ever do your homework without the pen. You just have to go to the store to get a new pen or your purpose in life will cease to exist. So you have to drive all the way back to the special thrift store that sells the pen you want

You're in a dilemma: Do you brave it out and try to go to school and back on very little gas? What's the worst that could

happen — you get stuck in the senior lot and your car runs out of gas while you're stopped in the middle of the road? Oh wait ... nevermind. I guess you'll just have to walk to school.



B. Gibson

- Morley rows with LG Rowing Club
- Gomez slides into the month of May

PEOPLE

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MIHALACHE RUNS INTO SUMMERTIME

by **Cara Davidson**
Public Relations Manager

Look out, future UCLA science students, because you will have a competitor for the top of your class. **Beatrice Mihalache**, an avid track athlete, aspiring scientist, kind humanitarian, and overall lovely senior is heading to UCLA in 2022.



Perfecting her athletic technique from day one, Mihalache began running cross country and track and field in the sixth grade. In her freshman year, Mihalache mainly stuck to the 200-meter dash, 400-meter sprint, and four-by-four relay where she consistently impressed her team, scoring valued points to the LGHS girls' Varsity track team at meets. "I love the energy... it's the last event, so everyone puts their last final bit of energy into that event and I love having my team." Mihalache enjoys experimenting with different

events, spontaneously pursuing long jump in sophomore year and testing her skills in discus this year.

An aspiring scientist, Mihalache enjoys studying up on physics, especially intrigued with her favorite class this year, Advanced Science Research (ASR). This year, she's been working especially hard on her project: testing the ability of fungi to degrade pollutants in soil. Her fascinations with science will not stop when high school ends; Mihalache plans to study biophysics at UCLA.

After taking a course about fungi, Mihalache now loves to read about mushrooms and other fungi, learning about what they do for the environment. Many would call her a "fun-guy," or rather, a "fun-gal." I'm sure she's never heard that one before... She is a woman of many interests and hobbies, as she also recently took up surfing and declares she loves to "catch a wave and lay on [her] board." She looks forward to surfing in Santa Monica by UCLA when she makes her journey south!

Not only that, but Mihalache is a member of the LGHS environmental outreach club, where she has been working on a multi-year-long project to get compost bins around the school and persuading schools to teach students about the importance of recycling. She is undoubtedly one of the best Samaritans around campus, striving to teach kids how to sort waste for a cleaner Earth. But that's not all; Mihalache and the rest of the environmental outreach club have been

working with organizations to help provide school children with clean drinking water with rainwater harvesting systems.

If you thought that this article, and Mihalache's long list of interests and talents stops there, you're wrong. She is a co-president of the art club and claims she can "make things look kind of good," which we all know is modesty. Each month, Beatrice and the art club work on a prompt relating to relevant causes like civil rights, social justice, or the environment. This month, they are detailing a piece about AAPI, which may possibly be as impressive as Mihalache herself.

We can all take tips from Mihalache, as she has worlds of interests and hobbies. Spoken from a truly determined and hard working student herself, "Just find things that you like to do, and also find people who like the same things as you... it's really the people around me that push me and keep me going."



photos courtesy B. Mihalache

Morley prepares to row for Stanford

by **Maya Gomez**
People Editor

Whether he's rowing with his team or researching biochemistry in his ASR class, senior **Logan Morley** puts 100 percent of his effort into all of his endeavours. The devoted 17-year-old spends time at home with his siblings, parents, and dog, Matilda.



courtesy L. Morley

In regards to online learning, Morley recalled that, "for the most part, the classes themselves were easier, but the actual learning of the content was more difficult than before the pandemic." The athlete is now attending in-person classes with most of his fellow LGHS students. Morley felt as though the first month of quarantine wasn't bad. "The amount of time to relax was super nice." He added that the extra amount of time also helped with college essays. "I think inherently, since I had so much free time, I kind of ruminated on things. I already had a pretty good setup for figuring out what to write about." This coming fall, Morley will be attending and rowing at Stanford University.

Having started in middle school, Morley has devoted countless hours, days, and years to rowing and became a coxswain only two years after beginning the sport. "The first time I got any exposure to [rowing] was when the coaches came into our P.E. class in the seventh grade. I started doing the middle school program and continued up to where I am now." Today, Morley rows with the Varsity Men's Los Gatos Rowing Club (LGRC) team as a coxswain. Luckily, his team has been practicing and is looking forward to updates on competitions.

While the Los Gatos Rowing Club teams have been holding practices throughout the coronavirus pandemic, aside from those revolving around strength and conditioning, Morley was unable to actually go inside of the boats until recently. "I didn't actually get back into a boat until about two or three weeks ago because we weren't allowed to go in the big [boats.] So we've been carefully and slowly shifting into those."

Despite the small break from his typical practices, Morley is glad to be back and is excited to spend his last season with the LGRC team. The athlete holds both his team and the sport itself close to his heart. "I need to be 100 percent on and 100 percent off. So when I'm at practice, my boat and my team are the only things I'm really thinking about." He explained, "I think I use it a lot as somewhat of a stress reliever or stress outlet. It's weirdly meditative, because I'm not given the chance to think about any tests or projects I have to finish tomorrow, or how much homework I need to do when I get home. I have to be fully present. Always."

A true leader, Logan Morley is devoted, altruistic, and beyond talented. The athlete has a bright and exciting future ahead of him at Stanford University.

Atkinson is never 'two tired' for a ride

by **Ethan Sanders**
People Editor

As he spends most of his time tearing down trails on his mountain bike and shredding the gnar on the ski slopes, you could say that senior **Dylan Atkinson** is always on X-Games mode.

Atkinson first got on a mountain bike as a little kid and would ride uncomplicated trails with his father. However, as he grew into his early teenage years, Atkinson itched for something more competitive and more exhilarating than leisurely rides. This need for speed led Atkinson to try his hand at cyclocross, a grueling and intense version of bicycle racing that involves a mixture of riding on various terrains and running while carrying your bike to pass obstructions. Since his first competition around five years ago, the senior has not only fallen in love with the sport of cyclocross but has excelled in it as well.



The athlete currently competes for Los Gatos Bicycle Racing Club as an individual, but also rides relays for the Specialized Cycle Sport team, with which he won the 4x4 Relay National Championship. In past years, the medalist has gotten first place in the California state championship and ranked eighteenth nationally for his age. Amid this impressive portfolio of victories, Atkinson claimed his "biggest cyclocross achievement was being able to partake in the Mon-



photos courtesy D. Atkinson

tana Cross Camp, a renowned training program that only admits the top 20 racers in the country."

Atkinson races all around North America, naming Canada, Montana, and Washington as some of the most remarkable places to do so; yet, he also confessed that his favorite place to ride is not in an exotic location, but simply "at a local park where [he] and [his] friends can build [their] own tracks and just have fun with it." Additionally, he disclosed that the hardware he wins is "rad," but his favorite part of the sport is the immense amount of pride he derives from pushing himself through all the natural elements out on the course and "trying to survive" as he races.

If he's not on a bike, Atkinson can be found in cooler climates, ripping down ski slopes or in warmer ones down at sea level, enjoying the surf. The multi-sport athlete picked up both skiing and surfing at around four years old and does them both as hobbies, but is still as talented on the snow and the water as he is on the mountain. Atkinson enjoys skiing up at Squaw Valley and surfing down at Pleasure Point, Santa Cruz, where he will even ride a surfboard he shaped himself.

Atkinson plans to continue his athletic and academic endeavors at Fort Lewis College in Colorado, but is also considering shaking things up by taking a gap year to go race cyclocross in Europe. No matter where he lands, have no doubt that Dylan Atkinson will blow the competition away in whatever he tries his hand at.

Miller dribbles his way into May

by **Lexi Kupor**
Public Relations Manager

An athletic maestro, four-year Leadership member, and diligent student in and out of the classroom, senior **Kevin "Mr. President" Miller** is a true Renaissance man. Whether it's through his sportsmanship on the LGHS basketball team, his role as ASB President, or his jovial chatter across the hallways where he literally and figuratively towers above his peers, Miller consistently advocates for the betterment of his community.

Miller first viewed the experience of school leadership through the eyes of his older sister **Lauren Miller** as he marveled at "the community... and lifelong bonds" that her class shared and that

he would soon join as a freshman. Throughout his high school career, Miller has treasured witnessing "the impact [he]...[made]" through arduous yet rewarding projects such as spirit week hallway decorating, where he took pride in "seeing everyone's faces light up as they walked in through the front steps."

As the year comes to a close, Miller focuses on the planning and executing the annual lip dub and senior prom to celebrate his class. His goals include "[building] relationships" that last beyond just the LGHS campus as he works to ensure the seniors remain "connected and united" throughout their final school days.

However, his leadership endeavors aren't the only place where Miller's determination shines through; he regularly proves his passion on the basketball court as well. The son of a basketball coach, Miller received his introduction to the sport early on; "since I could walk, I've been playing basketball," he reflected. In addition to the athletic aspect, Miller prizes the connections and mentorship he's been able to forge with students across grade levels, as well as the escape from daily obligations the game provides. As soon as Miller trots onto the court, "it's just me and the hoop."

Miller plans to strengthen this zeal for athleticism as he enters UCLA in the fall to study physiological sciences with the future goal of becoming a sports medicine specialist, as he was essentially "raised as a Bruin." He recognizes, however, that being a medical professional involves providing more than just physical

treatment; it also relies upon building deeper connections with patients and peers.

Miller experienced this acknowledgement first hand as he traveled from one hospital to the next over a two-year period of daily persistent headaches. During one particular stay, the nurse brought chocolate pudding to his bedside each night, allowing Miller to "smile even when [he] was in pain." This episode invigorated him to seek the same impact of "[helping] someone physically and emotionally" in his career and daily life.

While he won't be far from home, Miller looks forward to his new adventure in Los Angeles, a place where "part of my heart was always tuned in." A talkative spirit, Miller sums up his life philosophy succinctly: "you gotta work hard, but play hard."



photos courtesy K. Miller



Britton paints the day away

by Delaney Brown
Opinion Editor

Scintillating senior **Toby Britton** is one of the most multifaceted, multi-talented students you could ever have the pleasure of meeting. This gifted pupil has spent the entirety of his high school career curating a masterful portfolio brimming with mind-blowing art pieces which showcase Britton's knack for realism.

Britton first discovered his love for art as a young child; his mother "collects paintings and is also an artist so I've been exposed to really fantastic art ever since I can remember." While his early works mostly consisted of amateur doodles and fun drawings, Britton was really "able to develop my style by just doing fun and random things." The artist started to take art more seriously when he entered the eighth grade and had the opportunity to TA for an art class. This experience then inspired him to embark on an art pathway in high school.

Upon entering Art 1 with **Thad Smith**, Britton found a true creative outlet when working on new projects. He finds art to be "more of a long term emotional outlet. I would say I'm not a very impulsive person so I love how meticulous



and precise I need to be. I really get to play on my inner perfectionist which is always fun." While Mr. Smith's class gave Britton a lot of creative freedom, he was really able to develop his own personal style in **Augustina Matsui's** art classes.

Under Matsui's instruction, Britton found a deep appreciation for a more realist art style, citing artists like Michelangelo and Leonardo Da Vinci as his main inspirations and influences. While the artist appreciates modern and abstract styles, he finds more creative liberty under a realist umbrella. Although realism requires precision and strict detail, Britton "adores how you can convey feeling and emotion through more simple imagery."

After promptly establishing his style under the instruction of his art teachers, Britton has produced a variety of award-winning works, most recently his self portrait titled **Bigger Man**. In this painting, Britton is depicted in "a dress and there is a dead man in the mirror in the background." He used this imagery to critique the culture of toxic masculinity that dictates harmful male behaviors surrounding self expression. The "dead man in the background is meant to represent the dated and oppressive stereotypes that used to prevent me from being myself in a lot of social settings." Britton recently won a five thousand dollar



photos courtesy T. Britton

scholarship through the NUMU art competition with this piece, gaining the title of "Best in Show."

Britton hopes to continue his artistic prospects at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he plans on majoring in Art with a minor in Business Management. Britton will be joining a tight knit community of 40 art students with whom he will be studying in painting, drawing, and sculpture. Although the LGHS campus will dearly miss the bright and creative presence that is Toby Britton, his undeniable talent and self discipline will surely bring him incredible artistic success.

GOMEZ HITS IT OUT OF THE PARK

by Sofia Rossi and Alaina Fox
News Editor and Editor-in-Chief

A known star on the field, preparing to carry her prowess across the country to New York, senior **Rosie Gomez** makes an impact everywhere she goes.

Most people know Gomez for her softball skills, but she has excelled in other sports as well. Throughout middle school, she played basketball and volleyball, and in her freshman year, she played water polo. With her work ethic and natural talent, it's no surprise that she's found success in all her athletic endeavors. Softball, though, holds a special place in Gomez's heart. Having played it since she was six years old, she finds it "rewarding," and she has stuck with it through her life.

Beyond her athletic pursuits, science greatly appeals to Gomez. She reflected that she has "always liked medicine," and while she "wanted to go into nursing for a long time," she realized she could combine her interests by studying Sports and Exercise Healthcare at Canisius College in New York. Explaining the course of study, she noted that "it just suited [her]." Her various endeavors are demanding and time-consuming, but that never prevents Gomez from fully dedicating herself. "Making sure that I'm always giving 100 percent all the time is really important to me," she explained.

Though Gomez balances a busy schedule, she makes time for service, dedicating hours of effort to doing

good. Through the non-profit organization Youth Spirit Artworks (YSA), Gomez "build[s] tiny houses for homeless teenagers" in Oakland. Upon encountering YSA's Facebook last year at the beginning of the pandemic, Gomez found its plan of a "ten-year community organizing campaign to create '100 Homes for 100 Homeless Youth' in the East Bay Area" to be an inspiring cause, and she quickly involved herself in the project. Her work with the group is just one example of her characteristic compassion. Known around campus for her kindness, Gomez makes lasting, positive impressions with her words and actions in all that she does.

In her exceedingly rare free time, Gomez sets off with her camera to capture the world through photography, a passion she developed in sophomore year after taking LGHS's Digital Photography class. She particularly enjoys sports and nature photography; when she can find time, hikes provide ideal opportunities to take stunning shots. While she also enjoys the editing process, she finds the photography itself the most exciting.

Wherever you run into Gomez — playing on the softball field, studying in the labs, building homes, taking hikes, or very soon, exploring New York — there's no question about it: she will blow you away, and do it with a smile on her face.



courtesy R. Gomez

Chin flying-kicks the competition

by Maddie Dewhirst
National/World Editor

Undoubtedly one of the most hard-working people you will ever meet, senior **Dylan Chin** spends her time spearheading environmental projects, running track, and participating in taekwondo. In all of these activities and more, Chin brings a high level of intensity to everything that she does.

While she has always harbored a love for the outdoors, Chin has participated in several different initiatives to make a change in environmental policies. After attending a virtual "climate reality training over the summer," led in part by former Vice President Al Gore, Chin began serving as the Director of Engagement for Youth.ify, a youth-led climate organization.

Outside of her work at Youth.ify, Chin also presented at TedX Countdown and serves as secretary for the LGHS Environmental Outreach Club. One of the main undertakings of the club has been trying to get the school to recycle and compost. Chin explained: "We found out that we don't recycle at our school; everything goes into the same bin at the end of the day. And you have companies that will take our recycling and compost for free and help us do something simple that we can start doing. [So] we started a petition and talked to the administration and

here we are." LGHS is now planning to use compost bins on campus next school year.

While Chin undeniably sports a passion for environmentalism, she balances her time with athletics. A long-time taekwondo competitor, Chin has medals for being an Oregon and California Champion, as well as a National Champion. She also competes in various track and field events at the high school, including long jump, triple jump, shot put, and discus. When she isn't in the sand pits at the Los Gatos track, she certainly is at the beach, as she makes an effort to go surfing "anytime [she] can make it over the hill."

After four years at LGHS, Chin will bring her love for the environment to UC Berkeley College of Natural Resources next fall where she hopes to focus on environmental research. During her three years as a student in Advanced Science Research, Chin has researched technologies to help lessen humans' impact on the environment. Her first project focused on making a ferrofluid "to remove pesticides from the ocean." Her second research project tested the effects of microplastics on dinoflagellates — a single celled plankton that live symbiotically with coral — in order to ultimately test how microplastics affect corals. This year, Chin made a water filter using bacterial cellulose.

Chin will no doubt be a force to be reckoned with during college and beyond.



courtesy D. Chin

Bernholz battles climate change

by Sofia Rossi and Sasha Ryu
News Editor and Editor-in-Chief

Regardless of whatever burdens might be weighing you down, one conversation with senior **Paula Bernholz** will leave you smiling for the rest of the day. A dedicated student, a selfless community servant, and a role model to so many of her peers, Bernholz is the kind of person who naturally brings out the best in everyone she meets.

A UC Berkeley-bound environmentalist, Bernholz plans to spend her time in college preparing to offer companies guidance on how to reduce their carbon emissions. Given her passion for science and her broader desire to make the world a better place, Bernholz feels that working to preserve the planet's natural resources is an ideal career.

"Seeing all of these recent wildfires and seeing how people were just accepting it as the new norm was so frustrating," she expressed. "There are so many beautiful places [on Earth], and it's scary to know that it could all go away."

In addition to going vegan earlier this year, Bernholz currently works to be eco-friendly through her work as a member of the Los Gatos Youth Commission's Environmental Subcommittee. Throughout her time on the subcommittee, Bernholz has helped to organize the town's annual Spring Into Green event; she has also worked to award local businesses for being energy efficient.

Outside of her environmental work, Bernholz serves the school and the broader community as an active member of the Leadership class. During her four years in the class, she's been a member of the Freshmen Cabinet, a Spirit Representative, and involved in ASB Support.



courtesy P. Bernholz

"Leadership gave me so many important life skills [that I wouldn't have] gotten from a normal academic course — or even a [traditional] elective," Bernholz explained. "I learned how to work on a team because the class is so collaborative... I also learned how to take responsibility for my actions because I had to work with project budgets and decide on big purchases... I think a lot of my experience will end up helping me out in the business world."

While Leadership has been one of Bernholz's most long-term extracurricular commitments, she believes that working on Reality Check — a Peer to Peer group at LGHS dedicated to sharing anonymous stories written by students on various topics — was easily the "most impactful" thing she has done during her time in high school.

"I love that [Reality Check] gives people the space to talk about super taboo topics. Because I was on the staff, I had to collect stories from other people, and it taught me how to open up and be okay with having difficult conversations... It also taught me how important it was to establish trust with other people," she reflected.

Bernholz's natural ability to connect with others also translates to her tutoring work. Bernholz's parents raised her speaking several languages and she holds Argentine, German, and United States passports. A fluent Spanish speaker, Bernholz volunteers at a library in San Jose, helping other Spanish-speaking children complete their homework in English.

Now that Bernholz is about to graduate from LGHS, she wants younger students to remember to "be present in the moment."

"When you learn how to enjoy and appreciate life, that truly changes everything," she said. "We all still need to work hard, but I think we all have the time to reflect."

- Kaufman provides badminton update
- Driscoll wins LGHS Player of the Year

SPORTS

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National Football League 2021 draft takes place in Ohio

by Senji Torrey

Media Production Editor

The 2021 National Football League Draft is the epitome of a life-changing moment. For draftees, hearing their names called means a life-long dream finally coming to fruition, while supplying the team that granted this opportunity a renewed hope for the future of their franchise.



TIME TO WAIT: The San Francisco 49ers on the clock in the 2016 NFL Draft.

This year's draft was essentially the year of the quarterback, as evidenced by the fact that six of the first sixteen picks of the draft were quarterbacks. Moreover, the first three picks of the draft were all quarterbacks.

The event's first pick went to the Jacksonville Jaguars, who found a blessing in disguise after a 1-15 record during the 2020-2021 season.

The Jags selected Clemson's Trevor Lawrence. This pick was far from staggering; as NFL analyst Rich Eisen commented, "The inevitable has finally become reality."

The second pick gave the New York Jets, who had struggled in many positions in the 2020-21 season, a new hope for future success. Their new prospect, BYU's Zach Wilson, will provide the ailing Jets with a boost that could put them as the dark horse of the AFC East.

The Bay Area's San Francisco 49ers used their third pick to draft a quarterback of their own. Though the 49ers have a very solid quarterback in seven-year veteran Jimmy Garoppolo, SF simply couldn't resist taking a gamble with North Dakota State University's Trey Lance. Lance, the only non-Division 1 quarterback selected in the first round, impressed many at his Pro Day, drawing praise from ESPN analyst Louis Riddick, who commented that "He just exudes the kind of calmness and confidence that is going to bode very well for him as far as his projection to the next level."

One surprising moment came just two picks later when the Cincinnati Bengals took LSU wide receiver Ja'Marr Chase. Despite Chase's undeniable prowess, many fans and analysts hoped to see the offensive-line afflicted Bengals draft Oregon offensive tackle Penei Sewell. To be fair, most every other team also needed — and perhaps still needs — a better offensive front, yet many still contend that a wide receiver is the least of Cincinnati's worries.

With the eighth pick of the draft, the Carolina Panthers selected the first defensive player in Jaycee Horn. This South Carolina University cornerback is ranked second by the NFL among all secondary

players, trailing behind Alabama's Pat Surtain II, who got selected by the Denver Broncos with the ninth pick.

As per usual, the draft yielded late draft (potential) steals that left fans simply bumfuzzled as to why their team had not chosen them sooner. The statistical and analytical steal of the draft went to the Cleveland Browns when they selected Notre Dame linebacker Jeremiah Owusu-Koramoah with the 52nd pick of the draft. Owusu-Koramoah caught a rating of 6.82 on an 8 point scale, better than many defensive players taken before him. However, Owusu-Koramoah will still have to prove himself, along with every other draftee in the stacked 2021 NFL Draft.

(Sources: ESPN, Pro Football Reference, NFL, USA Today)



MAN OF THE YEAR: Israel Idonije is shown winning an award at the 2016 draft.

Badminton season finishes

by Jenna Roselli

Center Editor

With the 2021 badminton season coming to a close, members of the Varsity team played a great season with many wins and a more competitive nature between teammates. Under COVID-19 guidelines, the team only got to compete a limited number of times; nonetheless, they made the most of a season that was cut short.

LGHS junior **Elizaveta Ilnitskaia** spoke about the troubles the badminton team faced on the whole this year: "The season was weird because of COVID. [The team was] endorsed so [they] had to get tested around three times a week." She went on, explaining that she in fact enjoyed the repetitive testing, stating "we knew if another team or even ourselves had an issue right away."



GAME READY: Los Gatos badminton duo prepares for a set.

According to Ilnitskaia this season was extremely different in comparison to her past seasons. "[There were] less people, [COVID] testing, and [the team] really couldn't bring in parents to watch [the] games. [That aspect] wasn't really fun because [team members] were expecting [their] parents to come and watch some of [the] games [since they] had gotten better. I was excited for my parents to see how well I was doing."

Reflecting on the season she had, Ilnitskaia spoke on her favorite memories of the badminton season: "The best memory made was probably meeting with the seniors and the coach on the day of our last home game. It was nice to talk to and spend time with them, joking around and remembering the times from the previous seasons and talking about how different this season was because of COVID."

This badminton season was much shorter than a typical season for the team members. Their season lasted around two months, while normally it is much longer. The team roster was also cut from around 80 players to 20 players, cutting down from both a JV and Varsity team to just Varsity, due to COVID practicing guidelines and solid rules made by the SCC.

That didn't stop the team from taking dubs, though. Ilnitskaia mentioned the team had, "won three games in a row... The leagues are very competitive and [LG] is not exactly the highest league. It was crazy... [the team] did really well this season."

The badminton team as well as the avid viewers of the sport are ecstatic for what next year brings for a season without COVID.



HIT IT: Junior **Liam McCanny** plays in an intense game.

Update for LGHS volleyball

by Lucy Holland

Culture Editor

After a year of modified seasons, masked-up practices, and regular COVID-19 testing, the Wildcat's volleyball teams are wrapping up their successful seasons. With new head coach **Brynja Rodgers** leading the program, all of the boys and girls teams adapted to a new front of pandemic-season volleyball.

In the second wave of sports competing this year, the girls volleyball teams played games from Mar. 26 to Apr. 24. Going seven and two, the Varsity team finished second in their league. After decisive victories, winning three sets to zero in almost all of their games, LG's only losses came from Los Altos and Palo Alto, with both games reaching five sets. Junior **Siena Adams** said that "this season was basically just an extension of our previous season because we were conditioning for a while before we got inside. There were a lot of games in a short period of time, but it was still really competitive and a lot of fun."



GROUP HUDDLE: Boys volleyball team comes together.

The boys teams are wrapping up the remainder of their season with a similar success story. So far, the Varsity team is six and two, with their

only losses coming at the hands of Monta Vista and Mountain View, the latter going all the way to five sets. After a tough initial loss, the Wildcats put on an impressive display and redeemed themselves against Mountain View, winning three sets to one in their second meeting. Similar to the girls team, most of their wins have been dominant showcases, sweeping in three sets.



PERFECT TIMING: Senior **Nathan Richards** hits the ball.

As an indoor sport, volleyball has been hit hard with restrictions among high school athletics. Athletes must be tested two to three times a week, and masks must be worn at all times. Due to the condensed seasons, the Wildcats have been playing three games a week, and because the balls must be sanitized between every play, games last almost double the time they usually would. According to junior **Aidan Thomason**, with the end of the year fast approaching, and AP tests on the horizon, "volleyball has been really stressful and I don't have much time to do anything, but it's been really fun to be back with the team. I'm excited to finish out the season with everybody, and hopefully we get to have a full blown season next year." (Source: MaxPreps)

LGHS girls soccer goes undefeated in the 2021 season

by Senji Trrey

Media Production Editor

The coveted sporting achievement of an undefeated season has always seemed almost unattainable, and during the time of COVID, it has practically become a pipe dream. However, for this year's Varsity Girls' soccer team, a perfect season simply came naturally.

With a fast-paced schedule, many teams were forced to consolidate their practice times, compromising conditioning for a quicker season. However, this predicament did not faze LGHS in the least. In their early-season matchup against Homestead, the Wildcats set the league standard, putting three goals into the back of the net and conceding zero goals in 90 minutes. This game set the tone for the rest of the Wildcat's incredible season that would see them go on a superb run for first place.

After another dominating 4-0 victory over Santa Clara, LGHS seemed to be unstoppable; and they established their eminence once more

in their back-to-back fixtures against Los Altos. In these two matches, the Wildcats shut down and shut out the Eagles while capitalizing on two opportunities in each game. In their final match of the week, LG took on Gunn at home. The girls kept the scoreline a healthy distance away from Gunn. By the final whistle, LG had simply outplayed the Titans, claiming a decisive 4-1 victory over their opponent.



EYES UP: **Elianna Wong** watches the ball with intensity.

The second half of its season was packed with rematches against teams that they had previously beaten. The first rematch after the aforementioned sequential Los Altos games was against Homestead. The Wildcats' prior meeting with the Mustangs, which ended in a conclusive 3-0 win for the girls, was not emulated in this second fixture. Despite this, LG did come away with a 1-0 victory that contributed to its thriving season winning streak that now amounted to seven.

The most difficult game of the season came a week later in LG's rematch against Mountain View. After a scoreless first half, Los Gatos was only able to match Mountain View's second-half goal for a final score of 1-1. Though this tie did end the Wildcat's incredible win streak, the prospect of an undefeated season was still up for grabs for the girls.

With only two games left in the season, LGHS began to taste the sweet aroma of no defeats. In their second clash with Gunn, LG kept their composure, shooting in two goals while denying all of the Titan's goal-scoring efforts for a score of 2-0. The cherry on

top of a near-perfect season came in their final rematch versus Los Altos, where the Wildcats held off the Eagles to cross the finish line with a score of 3-2.

With an undefeated season, and no CCS due to the coronavirus, these select Wildcats have reached the maximum amount of success that a team can reach during these curious times. (Source: MaxPreps)



STRONG FORCE: Players come together after scoring.

Player of the Year: Driscoll sets numerous LG records

by **Maya Gomez**
People Editor

Having spent nearly 12 years swimming, senior **Matt Driscoll** has developed a life that revolves around water. The dedicated 18-year-old has put in countless hours, days, and years towards the sport, and will continue to do so at UC Santa Barbara this coming academic year.

The athlete's journey began at the ripe age of six as he began swimming with the Los Gatos Saratoga Recreation Aquatics (LGS Aquatics) Stingrays team. However, Driscoll recalled "first really taking the sport seriously in the seventh grade," and swimming no longer remained a leisure activity. The shift in devotion was inspired by his mother, a former member of Wisconsin University's



VICTORY CELEBRATION: Driscoll pumps his fist after finishing his race.

swim team, who "somewhat pushed [Driscoll] into it until it grew on [him]." Today, Driscoll swims with the De Anza Cupertino Aquatics (DACA) international team and the Varsity team at Los Gatos High School, specializing in freestyle, backstroke, and individual medley.

Before COVID, Driscoll's intensive team training and practicing was done at De Anza College in Cupertino. However, due to coronavirus shutdowns, his DACA team has been practicing in Saratoga recently. "We're practicing in the mornings for an hour and 15 minutes right now. Typically when we meet, the sun isn't fully out yet, so we start and end our practices before sunrise, doing around 5,000 to 6,000 yards in the pool." Along with his team practices and training conducted outside of the pool, Driscoll also "focuses on [his] diet, making sure to include lots of vegetables and protein" in order to stay in shape.

Driscoll has been working towards swimming in college for years now. "I must have been in eighth grade, or maybe the end of seventh grade. I was like, 'oh okay, this is something that I can do' and realized I could be capable of swimming in college if I worked hard enough." The blood, sweat, and tears seem to have paid off, as Driscoll will be a student athlete at UCSB this coming fall.

Driscoll's recruitment process was luckily not heavily affected by COVID-19. "I had gotten offers before the pandemic and had already visited my top two schools." Driscoll added, "I had to decide between Harvard and UCSB. They're both great schools, but it was a choice between Harvard and the school that I really wanted to go to." Driscoll committed to UC Santa Barbara back in July 2020, and will be studying Biology there in August.

Having been involved in the sport for so long, Driscoll has experienced both the ups and downs. "I would advise younger swimmers to surround themselves with hardworking people. It's going to suck if you don't like the community aspect of it." While swimming may be more of an individualistic sport, Driscoll explained that "it is hard to do it by yourself," and is forever grateful for those he surrounded himself with.

Driscoll's determination and devotion both in and out of the pool is unmatched. The bright young man has a bright future ahead at UCSB.



photos courtesy M. Driscoll

MAKING IT OFFICIAL: Driscoll signs the papers to officially commit to UCSB.

Basketball teams eye CCS

by **Maddie Dewhurst**
National/World Editor

In spite of the short season and limited fans, both the girls and boys Varsity basketball teams managed to pull off some great wins and are both looking towards a strong finish to the season. The boys team holds a 6-3 overall record and are 3-3 in league, while the girls team holds a 3-6 overall record and are 2-5 in league.

The boys' Varsity team began their season with a strong start, winning their first four games. On Apr. 21, the Cats opened with a 45-44 win over Mountain View in a non-conference game. The next day, they went on to beat Santa Teresa 46-37. After beating Mountain View for a second time, Los Gatos carried that energy on and scored their biggest win of the season so far, defeating Fremont 69-22 on Apr. 28. However, the Wildcats lost their next game to the Firebirds 45-58, and then lost to Saratoga 38-54. They were then able to bounce back the following week, beating Lynbrook 43-38. For the most part, teams are playing each other back-to-back to limit overall exposure to possible COVID-19 infections.

The boys' season was interrupted due to a false-positive COVID-19 test, causing them to miss games from May 7 through 15. However, they have since been able to resume playing and look forward to the Central Coast Section after the regular season. After resuming, the Cats lost 43-52 to Monte Vista,



TIP TIME: The basketball team goes after a jump ball.



SMOOTH SHOT: Senior **Olivia Lo** shoots over the defense.

but were able to come back the following game and beat the Matadors 66-58. Speaking about how to maintain their success for the remainder of the season, senior captain **Kevin Miller** claimed, "we just need to come together and play as a team."

The girls' Varsity team started their season with a 42-46 loss to Mountain View, but came roaring back the next game, defeating the Spartans 56-25. They then fell twice to Los Altos, first by 40-55 but lost only 26-29 on their subsequent matchup. The Wildcats then lost twice to Lynbrook, who leads the league with a 10-1 overall record, before coming back to beat Saratoga 45-41 on a weekend game. Last week, Los Gatos lost to Homestead in a last minute buzzer beater, falling 41-43 before coming back to beat them 60-32 three days later.

Speaking on how the season has been going so far, Head Coach **Sara Quilici Giles** noted that the girls' Varsity team has "low numbers and although it would be nice to have a couple more wins, our last 4 losses have come by a total of 11 points. So we're in every game and we're playing hard." Quilici Giles also recognized the brevity of the season, remarking: "It's important to not take our time together for granted. Just being able to play this year is a blessing and we're thankful for the opportunity to get better together."

(Sources: MaxPreps, Los Gatos Athletics)

Girls LAX begins season

by **Jackie King**
Humor Editor

The Los Gatos High School girls lacrosse team has returned to action after its season came to a sudden and abrupt end in March 2020. Senior captains **Alex Mongiello**, **Abby Hooper**, and **Katrina Potts** led pre-season practices twice a week from early February to the beginning of the official tryouts in late March to help the teams get back in the swing of things after almost a full year off. The girls have been back in action since the first week of April, training five times a week.



FLIGHT MODE: Senior **Amelia Petroff** fights for the ball.

The Cats played their first game of the season against rival Palo Alto High School. After going back and forth all game, Los Gatos fell short of a win, losing 7-8 to the Vikings in the last seconds of the game. Despite the final score, the girls put up a great fight against the Vikings. With goals coming from all around the team, this was a great start to the 2021 season.

This rivalry loss lit a fire under the Los Gatos team and did not hold them back from giving their all in practice the next week. Their hard work was noticeable as they came back stronger than ever, beating the Wilcox Chargers by an unheard-of margin of 21-1 and the Los Altos Eagles 17-0. Sophomore Varsity player **Jackie Enns** explained that the team took these games very seriously, despite them being less competitive. "Our team spent these games focusing on improving our own skills and practicing plays against [a] real defense, rather than taking all of the easy goals," Enns said. "We looked at every offensive and defensive possession as a way to improve rather than just run up the score."

The Cats were tested again when they played the undefeated Mountain View Spartans, a team predicted to dominate the League this year. After a nail biting 60 minutes, the Cats lost by one goal differential again 11-12, but the score did not show how well the team played all game. Being the #1 ranked team in the league, the Spartans were supposed to annihilate the Cats, but the girls held their own and made Mountain View work hard for the win. Junior starting goalie **Maddie Holloway** stated that "it was a really hard-fought game. Our team connected really well at the end, but sadly we couldn't finish it out." Holloway is confident that after a few more weeks of hard work they will be prepared to take the win.

The Cats took down the Saratoga Falcons on May 5 with a score of 19-4, and gained redemption against their Paly revivals, beating them on Saturday, May 15, 16-9, finally showing their dominance and that they should not be underestimated. The team still has more than half of its season left and get a second chance to play all the teams it has played so far, so be sure to wish the girls good luck as they finish out the season strong!

Varsity field hockey finishes near undefeated season

by **Caroline Wagner**
Graphics Designer

The bench roared with cheers after an exceptional goal by senior and Varsity captain **Amelia Petroff**, who scored during the first few minutes of an hour-long game against Saint Francis. The Wildcat field hockey team finally kicked off its season with a 1-0 win against the Lancers on Mar. 22, seven months after their season was originally supposed to begin. In the back, goalie **Katya Vrijen** fortified the defense, clearing any balls that came near the goal.



LOOSE BALL: Players from both teams tussle in an effort to possess the ball.

Three days later, the Wildcats clutched another win against Presentation. Junior **Ava Ginsburg** and sophomore **Jiwoo Hong** contributed to the scoreboard, leading the team to a 5-0 victory.

The Wildcats then lost to rival Archbishop Mitty in a nail-biting game at home on Apr. 1. After finishing 0-0, the game went into overtime with each team only allowed to play seven players for seven minutes. Mitty managed to snag a short corner in the last few seconds of overtime, and the game ended with a quick shot to the cage. Although the Wildcats lost to Mitty during the CCS championship of 2019, this is the first time the team has lost to Mitty during the season in over five years.

Despite the loss, the Wildcats were able to recuperate and clinch two more victories: a 7-0 win against Cupertino and a 5-1 win against Presentation. Petroff and senior **Grace Christensen** each put two goals in against Cupertino, and at Presentation, Petroff carried the team to a victory with four goals and one assist. In the back, junior **Maia Dewinter** and senior **Blake Brennan** fortified the defense.

The Cats came back with a vengeance and eked out a 1-0 victory against Mitty, and they ended the season with a 5-1 win against Saint Francis, securing their spot as the unofficial league champions.

Despite many delays, it looks like the field hockey team finally got the chance to have a season. "Summer practices turned into fall practices, then winter, then spring, and just when we started to lose hope, we learned that our season started in two weeks," said Petroff, co-captain of the team. "I'm really proud of everyone for staying



WARMING UP: LGHS field hockey players take time to practice before a game.

committed during this season because it's been the most difficult one yet. The fact that so many people were willing to show up to practice even when the season wasn't a guarantee reaffirms that we really love the sport and community that we've created on the field."

Although it has been a year with many challenges for the Cats, Varsity prevailed with seven wins and only one loss for the season. Similarly, junior Varsity held strong and only suffered one loss against Saint Francis. It is clear that the team's hard work and dedication to the sport has paid off.

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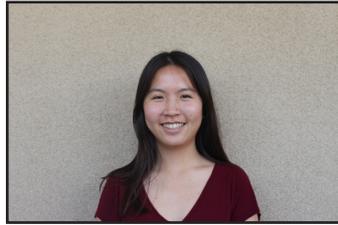
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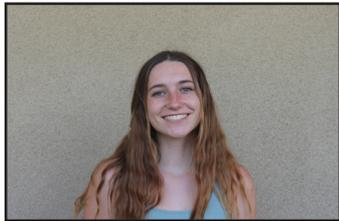
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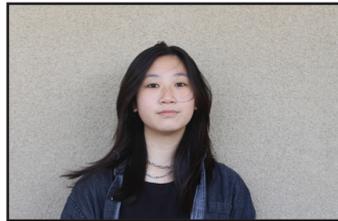
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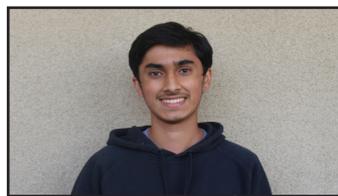
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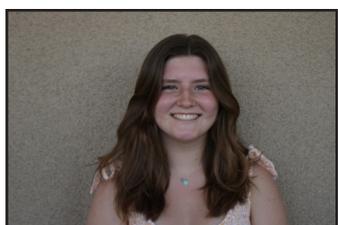
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